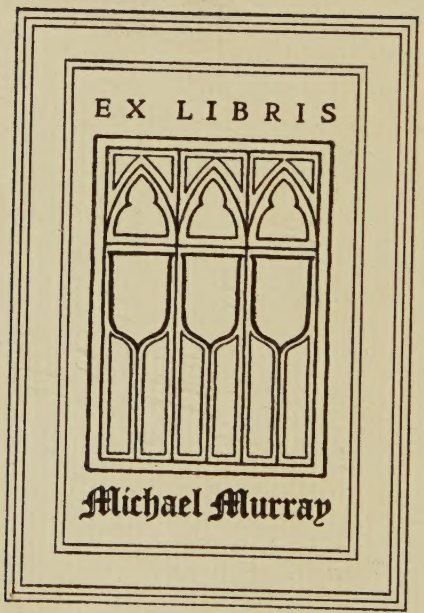
Our Priesthood

J. Bruneau, S.S.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Our Priesthood

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Our Priesthood

BY THE

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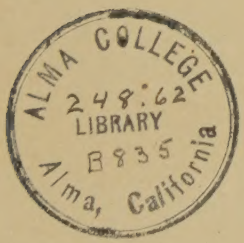

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Feast of the Nativity of the

Blessed Virgin

1911

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To His Eminence

Cardinal Gibbons

The Fiftieth Anniversary

of his

Priesthood

FOREWORD

THESE conferences were not intended for publication. They were meant as simple talks to seminarians preparing for ordination. In fact they were more an echo than anything else, as the author, in accordance with the precept of St. Paul: "*Quæ audisti a me per multos testes, hæc commenda fidelibus hominibus, qui idonei erunt et alios docere,*" was merely trying to deliver to his younger brothers the message he had received from the zealous priests by whom he had been trained in his seminary days, and to these holy men is due whatever merit may be found in this commentary on the "*Ritus Ordinationis.*" It was however suggested to the author by not a few of his hearers and friends that some satisfaction and benefit would come of their publication.

It might indeed please God to use these talks—such as they are—as an instrument of grace. Anything can be successful in His hands! As to the pleasure which could be derived from the perusal of this book, by those who heard its contents, this possibly might be the result of their grateful remembrance and indulgent kindness. We like to believe that this little book might strengthen ties of affection which, being formed by God, surely "no man can put asunder." Hence we thought it best to reproduce these lectures in their original form with the addition of only a few notes; thus they would be more real, even though the very form of a spoken word does entail a greater imperfection.

Still, what determined the author to accede now to the desires of his former hearers and to ignore the many reasons he had to remain silent, was the felicitous occurrence of the golden jubilee of His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons. So many tokens of paternal kindness had he received from the illustrious prelate, that he craved the privilege of offering to His Eminence some slight tribute of respect and love on this memorable occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

What ideal of the priesthood Cardinal Gibbons entertains, is known to all from his admirable book *The Ambassador of Christ*, in which he sets forth the very lessons and counsels which his life has exemplified in the Church of America, nay in the whole Catholic Church, here and abroad. The same ideal—*Sacerdos, alter Christus*—do we present to our readers. In fact, His Eminence insinuates that he derived his concept of the priesthood from the same sources from which we drank. So we conceived that the title "Our Priesthood" would be most fitting both to mark the greatest* anniversary of Cardinal Gibbons' life, and to sum up for the younger clergy of America the lessons given by Holy Mother Church to her levites when about to be associated for ever with the Priesthood of Christ—Our Priesthood.

Baltimore,
Feast of the Divine Priesthood
of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
June 23, 1911.

*When writing this, we cannot help thinking of the words pronounced by His Eminence Cardinal Perraud: "Beloved friends," did he say to his seminarians, "all the mitres, all the tiaras are nothing—I say, nothing at all—compared to the honor of offering the Holy Sacrifice, of saying one Mass, even though in the humblest church of the poorest hamlet."—*Discours aux fêtes jubilaires.*

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OUR PRIESTHOOD

Domine, in simplicitate cordis mei, laetus obtuli universa.
In the simplicity of my heart, I have joyfully offered all these.—I PAR. 29, 17.

Gentlemen: It is with the greatest joy that I undertake today the important office entrusted to me. There is no mission which I consider as sacred and sacerdotal as the duty of addressing the chosen ones of the Lord, of showing them the grandeur of their priestly vocation and of teaching them the virtues which Holy Mother Church expects them to practice.

But I feel also how difficult it is to do justice to such a task, and I request you to ask the blessing of God upon it. My task is to explain the Pontifical to young men preparing for ordination! Now (1) what are the ordinands in the light of faith? (2) what is the Pontifical? (3) whence should we derive an explanation of this book?

These are the preliminary questions which I wish to treat briefly.

1. By Holy Orders, or ordination, we mean a ceremony and a state. We mean an action which is transient, a ceremony which cannot be renewed: this will take place at the end of the week. We mean also a state, an order, a degree of the hierarchy in which you will be placed and which will remain forever.

But in order that the ceremony may have its complete efficacy some actual dispositions are required. On the other hand, the order supposes and requires some habitual

dispositions, some aptitudes given by God, some habits acquired and strengthened by our effort, some virtues developed by our work and endeavors.

The aim of the retreat is precisely to prepare your soul for this ceremony by a more complete withdrawal from all external preoccupations, a deeper recollection of mind and an entire purification of soul. At the same time, it will give you an opportunity of studying your aptitudes, of completing and perfecting the virtues and dispositions necessary for the new orders to which you will be promoted.

The ordination is a solemn action which unites God and man by the immortal bonds of an affectionate and salutary communion. On one hand, behold a young man who, without anything but his good will, freely accepts an irrevocable engagement; on the other, God, having no need but that of communicating His love, imparts to this young man honours and graces.

On account of these engagements, of these graces, the ordinands are in a situation such that, in a certain sense, no other is of so momentous importance. Solemn and supreme is the hour of death! I dare to say it is hardly as important as this other hour, so quickly spent, viz. the retreat preparatory for the ordination.* When the hour of death comes, an eternity of happiness or suffering is, indeed, at stake; but now, during this retreat, the question at stake is the salvation of a multitude of souls. *Positus hic est in ruinam et in resurrectionem multorum.* You will be to souls what the ordination will have made you, and the ordination will be, to a great extent, at least,

*See Bishop Rey, *Retraite Pastorale*, II, Réflexions sur l'ordination, p. 269.

just what the retreat will have prepared for. You may then understand why Holy Mother Church shows such tender care for her ordinands, and why she offers during this week her prayers as well as her expiatory sacrifices. She lives through her priests! and for many of her children, your ordination will be a question of life or death.

2. Now, what is the *Pontifical?* What part should it have in your preparation? The Pontifical is a book: therefore a light, therefore a life: *Vita erat lux.* In this book are contained the rites which constitute this solemn act for which you are preparing, and the enacting of which is sufficient to produce the wonderful transformation which will take place at the ordination.

This book has been composed by the Church, who always assisted by the Holy Ghost, by that same Spirit that inspired the Prophets and the Apostles; and in this book, she lays before us her idea of the priesthood. Is there any other voice more authoritative to express—clearly and completely—what are the thoughts, the intentions, the wishes of Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Priest, to those with whom He decides to share the honours and offices of His divine priesthood?

You are anxious to know, dear friends, what honours, what glorious privileges Jesus has prepared for you; and also what strict obligations and heavy responsibilities will be placed on your shoulders: to all these questions the Pontifical gives answer. For in this book are contained both your titles of nobility and the programme of your priestly life, as well as the formula of your engagements.

3. Now it is my privilege and my duty to *explain* to you this book, namely, according to the etymological meaning, to unfold it before your eyes and show forth all

that it contains, so as to make you fully understand the designs of God upon you. Of course, for such a task, we have to go to our Lord, the true Light: "*Cœpit facere et docere*," says St. Luke. He always gave the example of what He taught. Since therefore, this book contains the idea of our Lord about the priesthood, the best commentary upon it should be the very life of our divine Saviour. The life of our Lord is, if I may so speak, the first edition, the *editio princeps* of the Pontifical, which throws light on the text of the subsequent editions.

The name Jesus means Saviour; His mission has been that of a Redeemer; His life has been one of sacrifice, and the most fundamental and constant disposition of His Sacred Heart is that of victim, of a victim come to replace the sacrifices of old. Therefore it was fitting that His sacrifice should have the same phases as those found in the Old Testament sacrifices. The victim had to be prepared, immolated and consumed. Such have been also the phases of our Lord's life. Our divine victim was offered to God from the first instant of the Incarnation. Then during thirty years, in the silence of Nazareth, as well as during the three years of the public life, the victim continued His sacrifice, preparing for the immolation. The bloody immolation took place on Calvary. Then while the divine victim was transformed by the glory of the Resurrection and the Ascension, this sacrificial state was perpetuated on our altars so that by the most wonderful prodigy of love, the most intimate communion between God and man can take place, and every day, we receive and commune with the victim of Calvary.

Such are the rites described in that grand Pontifical which is the life of our Lord. But here is a light thrown

by it on our own Pontifical, because there is, and there ought to be, a likeness between His Priesthood and our Priesthood, between the Cross on which He was priest and victim, and the Altar of which we are ministers.*

To the first step of the Word towards the Cross—the Incarnation—corresponds the first oblation of the young cleric. To the life at Nazareth and the public life corresponds the seminary life with the first exercises of zeal which constitutes the apprenticeship of the priesthood, or the minor orders. The subdiaconate is the immolation of the victim prepared and adorned by the previous orders. In the triumphal and divine life after the Resurrection the Deacon may contemplate the model of that divine strength which his own life should manifest. Then, on the last day, we will stay at the door of the Tabernacle, to study Jesus giving himself to men and listen to that truly divine word, the end and the epitome of your clerical training: "*Imitamini quod tractatis . . . . . Sacerdos alter Christus.*"

So, we will not for a moment part with Jesus during this week: such is the express desire of our Lord, or rather it is the formal and last will of our dying Friend: "*Volo,*" He said, "*Volo, Pater, ut ubi sum ego et illi sint mecum!*"

*This idea of the parallelism between the sacrifice of Christ and the ordinations is developed by the Very Rev. L. Branchereau, in a series of meditations on the landmarks of priestly life. See his *Meditations for the Use of Seminarians and Priests*, Vol. III, p. 312–352 Cf. also C. De Condren: *The Eternal Sacrifice*, Part I, The priesthood of Christ—a book too little known; S. M. Giraud, *Prêtre et Hostie.*

RITUS ORDINATIONUM

De Ordinibus Conferendis

CUM igitur Ordinationes faciendæ sunt, per Sacristam, seu alium, ad quem spectat, præparantur omnia, quæ necessaria sunt pro Missa Pontificali. Et demum, cum tempus Ordinationis instat, hora competenti, Pontifex cappa magna indutus, Capellano illam post eum deferente, venit ad Ecclesiam, ubi Ordinationes fieri debent, et accedens ante altare, genuflexus ibidem aliquamdiu orat. Deinde vadit ad sedem, ubi paramenta capere consuevit; vel si non sit in Ecclesia sua, ad faldistorium in cornu Epistolæ sibi paratum, ubi sedens accipit omnia paramenta Pontificalia coloris tempori convenientis, et mitram simplicem, dicens Psalm. *Quam dilecta*, etc.

Pontifex sic paratus, baculum Pastoralem in sinistra tenens, accedit ad gradus altaris, ubi, depositis baculo et mitra, facta altari reverentia cum profunda capitis inclinatione, facit cum Ministris Confessionem. Interim cantatur a Choro Introitus, et *Kyrie eleison.* Finita Confessione, Pontifex ascendit ad altare, illud in medio osculatur, et textum Evangelii ad sinistram: incensat altare more solito, resumit mitram, et revertitur ad sedem, seu ad faldistorium ad cornu Epistolæ; ubi, deposita mitra, et versa facie ad altare, oblato sibi per ministrum libro ex eo legit Introitum, et *Kyrie eleison:* quibus dictis, sedet cum mitra, donec perficiatur a Choro ultimum *Kyrie eleison.* Quo finito, surgit Pontifex, et cum mitra ad faldistorium, ante medium altaris sibi præparatum, accedit, et in illo sedet, renibus altari versis. Tum Archidiaconus vocat omnes ordinandos, dicens:

Accédant omnes, qui ordinándi sunt

Quibus ante altare coram Pontifice genuflexis, et in modum coronæ dispositis, Archidiaconus publice interrogat omnes, si sint aliqui, qui forte non sint confirmati; quia non debent ad Ordinationem accedere, nisi prius confirmentur. Et, si aliqui confirmandi erunt,

tunc depositis Pontifex annulis et chirothecis, lavat manus, reassumit annulos, et eos confirmat. Vel si non erunt aliqui confirmandi, palam interdicit per unum ex suis, sub his verbis:

Reverendissimus in Christo Pater, et Dóminus, Dóminus N. Dei et Apostólicæ Sedis grátia Epíscopus N. sub excommunicatiónis pœna præcipit et mandat ómnibus, et síngulis pro suscipiéndis Ordínibus hic præséntibus, ne quis forsan eórum irreguláris, aut álias a jure, vel ab hómine excommunicátus, interdíctus, suspénsus, spúrius, infámis, aut álias a jure prohíbitus, sive ex aliéna Diœcési oriúndus, sine licéntia sui Epíscopi, aut non descríptus, examinátus, approbátus, et nominátus, ullo pacto áudeat ad suscipiéndos Ordines accédere. Et quod nullus ex ordinátis discédat, nisi Missa finíta, et benedictióne Pontíficis accépta.

Demum ad ordinationem procedat.

De Clerico Faciendo

Clericus fieri potest etiam extra Missarum solemnia quocumque die, hora et loco.

Pro Clericis ordinandis, parentur forfices pro incidendis capillis, et bacile pro illis imponendis. Et quilibet Ordinandorum habere debet suum superpelliceum super brachium sinistrum, et candelam in manu dextra. Et vocantur omnes Tonsurandi nominatim, et sigillatim per Notarium, et quilibet respondet:

Adsum.

Quibus ante altare coram Pontifice in faldistorio cum mitra sedente genuflexis, Pontifex surgit cum mitra, et dicit:

℣. Sit nomen Dómini benedíctum.
℟. Ex hoc nunc, et usque in sæculum.
℣. Adjutórium nostrum in nómine Dómini.
℟. Qui fecit cœlum et terram.

Oremus, fratres charíssimi, Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, pro his fámulis suis, qui ad deponéndum comas cápitum suórum pro ejus amóre festínant, ut donet eis Spíritum Sanctum, qui hábitum Religiónis in eis in perpétuum consérvet, et a mundi impediménto, ac sæculári desidério corda eórum deféndat; ut, sicut immutántur in vúltibus, ita déxtera manus ejus virtútis tríbuat eis increménta, et ab omni cæcitáte spirituáli et humána óculos eórum apériat, et lumen eis ætérnæ grátiæ concédat. Qui vivit et regnat cum Deo Patre in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum.

Post hæc, sedente Pontifice, schola inchoat, et prosequitur antiphonam, et psalmum:

Tu es, Domine, qui restitues hæreditatem meam mihi.

Ps. Conserva me, Domine, quoniam speravi in te: dixi Domino: Deus meus es tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non eges.

Sanctis, qui sunt in terra ejus,* mirificávit omnes voluntátes meas in eis.

Multiplicátæ sunt infirmitátes eórum;* póstea acceleravérunt.

Non congregábo conventícula eórum de sanguínibus:* nec memor ero nóminum eórum per lábia mea.

Repetitur tota Antiphona:

Tu es Dómine.

Incepto psalmo, Pontifex cum forficibus incidit unicuique extremitates capillorum in quatuor locis; videlicet, in fronte, in

occipitio, et ad utramque aurem, deinde in medio capitis aliquot crines capillorum, et in bacile deponit, et quilibet, (1) cum tondetur, dicit:

Dominus pars hæreditátis meæ, et cálicis mei : tu es, qui restítues hæreditátem meam mihi.

Omnibus tonsis, mitra deposita, surgit Pontifex, et stans versus ad illos, dicit:

Orémus.

Præsta, quæsumus omnípotens Deus, ut hi fámuli tui, quorum hódie comas cápitum pro amóre divíno deposúimus, in tua dilectióne perpétuo máneant; et eos sine mácula in sempitérnum custódias. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. *R.* Amen.

Tunc schola inchoat, et prosequitur Antiphonam sequentem. Qua incepta, Pontifex sedet cum mitra.

Hi accipient benedictionem a Domino: et misericordiam a Deo salutari suo: quia hæc est generatio quærentium Dominum.

Ps. Domini est terra, et plenitudo ejus: *orbis terrarum, et universi qui habitant in eo.

Quia ipse super mária fundávit eum: * et super flúmina præparávit eum.

Quis ascéndet in montem Dómini? * aut quis stabit in loco sancto ejus?

Innocens mánibus ,et mundo corde, * qui non accépit in vano ánimam suam, nec jurávit in dolo próximo suo.

Hic accípiet benedictiónem a Dómino; * et misericórdiam a Deo salutári suo.

(1) Et Episcopus juxta morem eadem verba simul profert. S. R. C. 12 nov. 1831.

Hæc est generátio quæréntium eum, * quæréntium fáciem Dei Jacob.

Attóllite portas, príncipes, vestras, et elevámini portæ æternáles: * et introíbit Rex glóriæ.

Quis est iste Rex glóriæ? * Dóminus fortis, et potens : Dóminus potens in prælio.

Attóllite portas, príncipes, vestras, et elevámini portæ æternáles :* et introíbit Rex glóriæ.

Quis est iste Rex glóriæ? * Dóminus virtútum ipse est Rex glóriæ.

Glória Patri, et Fílio : * et Spirítui sancto.

Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper : * et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.

Deinde repetitur tota Antiphona:

Hi accípient, etc.

Qua finita, surgit sine mitra Pontifex, et ad altare conversus, dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri dicunt:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte:

Et mox ad tonsos genuflexos versus Pontifex, dicit:

Adesto, Dómine, supplicatiónibus nostris, et hos fámulos tuos bene ✠-dícere dignáre, quibus in tuo sancto nómine hábitum sacræ religiónis impónimus, ut, te largiénte, et devóti in Ecclésia tua persístere; et vitam percípere mereántur ætérnam. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. ℟. Amen.

Tum Pontifex sedet cum mitra, et accipiens in manum superpelliceum, dicit singulis:

Induat te Dóminus novum hóminem, qui secúndum Deum creátus est in justítia, et sanctitáte veritátis.

Et mox imponit illud cuilibet, repetendo: *Induat te*, etc., immittens usque ad scapulas, et immediate trahens, si unum tantum sit superpelliceum: sicque facit usque ad ultimum, qui eo totaliter induitur; si vero quisque suum superpelliceum habeat, singuli totaliter induuntur. Quo expedito, sine mitra surgit Pontifex, et versus ad illos dicit:

Orémus.

Omnipotens sempitérne Deus, propitiáre peccátis nostris, et ab omni servitúte sæculáris hábitus hos fámulos tuos emúnda; ut, dum ignomíniam sæculáris hábitus depónunt, tua semper in ævum grátia perfruántur; ut sicut similitúdinem corónæ tuæ eos gestáre fácimus in capítibus, sic tua virtúte hæreditátem súbsequi mereántur ætérnam in córdibus. Qui cum Patre, et Spíritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Deinde sedet cum mitra Pontifex, et alloquitur eos sub his verbis:

Filii charíssimi, animadvértere debétis, quod hódie de foro Ecclésiæ facti estis, et privilégia Clericália sortíti estis. Cavéte ígitur, ne propter culpas vestras illa perdátis; et hábitu honésto, bonísque moribus, atque opéribus Deo placére studeátis: Quod ipse vobis concédat per Spíritum sanctum suum. ℟. Amen.

Tum, suggerente Archidiacono, Ordinati redeunt ad loca sua.

TONSURE

WHAT does the Lord expect from this young man who comes to receive the clerical tonsure, and to be admitted into the clergy? Above all an offering, a joyful oblation because it should be universal. *In simplicitate cordis mei lætus obtuli universa.*" There accompanies the first step a delicious feeling, an exquisite fragrance, a sweet consolation, which is perhaps never to be found again. Greater powers, higher honours will be conferred upon you later on, but with them, terrible responsibilities will be assumed; whilst here, the cleric receives no power at all, but gives everything, even himself; never shall he be able to give more; he may renew his donation, but more he cannot give. And does not our Lord say, "*Beatius est magis dare quam accipere?*"*

Tonsure is not properly an order: it is a preparation for orders—and that in a twofold manner: (*a*) if tonsure is received with proper dispositions, you may have a moral

*"In whatever way I regard the ceremony of Tonsure it appears to me as an offering whose end should be sacrifice. Although not an order, yet it includes, in a certain sense, all the orders, in which the new cleric participates by desire and by the aspirations of his soul, engaging himself to receive their obligations in due time. In the mystery of Christ's Presentation in the temple, I see neither the bloody sweat of His agony nor the scourge and the thorns of the pretorium, nor the cross, the nails, the lance of Calvary. And yet the offering of Himself that Christ made implied all these sufferings, since in offering Himself to God as victim, he accepted them all."—BRANCHEREAU, *l.c.*, p. 318–319.

certainty that the orders shall be well received; whilst any neglect in this first initiation would be a very bad sign. (*b*) A preparation it is also in this sense that the virtues which Tonsure implies and teaches, if only well practised, would be sufficient to fit you for the life of a holy priest.

We may group all our commentaries under three heads: (1) The preparation of the ordinand. (2) His consecration. (3) The sacred habit which expresses what should be the internal sentiments of the new cleric.

1. Preparation of the Cleric

The Holy Mass is begun. Again and again the Bishop has repeated the cry of his supplication "*Kyrie eleison.*" The Archdeacon now calls the ordinands. When your name is called, you will answer in a firm tone of voice "*Adsum,*" I am ready. How much is implied in that word: I am ready! The Bishop, Ἐπίσκοπος, the watcher par excellence, has been diligently informed about the family, the person, the age, the education, the faith and moral life of the candidates. He declares excommunicated anyone who might have been presumptuous enough to present himself without being examined and described on these different points.

A threefold preparation is indicated:

1. Baptism and confirmation, expressed by the mention of your Christian names;

2. Your family name is proclaimed as a token of the good education and training which you must have received at home from the days of childhood;

3. Then the invitation in the name of the Bishop to come to the altar is the formal expression of your divine

calling: "*Audi et vide et inclina aurem tuam et obliviscere populum tuum et domum patris tui.*"

1. Do we consider often enough what our title of Christian means and implies? St. Peter sums up our dignity in two words: "*Ut filii Dei nominemur et simus.*" To bear the name of son of God, but to be also the son of God! To judge as a Christian; to speak as a Christian; to love as a Christian; to act as a Christian; to give in a thoroughly Christian life a vivid commentary on the divine Gospel! But, mind, gentlemen, that grace presupposes nature. The supernatural life of a Christian would be a mere delusion if it had not as a foundation* the solid basis of natural virtues. The cleric, above all, must be an upright, manly Christian, a gentleman and a man of honour and high principles. This means that he ought to have great respect for truth, great respect for himself, for his word and his promise, respect also for the property of others, for their reputation, for their time, for their money. A priest wanting in those qualities will never inspire confidence, especially nowadays in this country. What would be the use of confirmation which makes us soldiers of Christ, perfect Christians, if the very basis of our Christian virtues, the natural virtues, were lacking?†

*We mean that these virtues are the most essential, indispensable; but not at all that they can be acquired in the proper degree without supernatural help.

†"The priest . . . . is a living sermon, teaching all day long, by simple contact, the virtues not only of the Christian, but also of the man, for even in the humbler, yet necessary qualities of the natural life, he feels it due to his character that he should strive to be equal to the best,—upright, honorable, reliable, generous,—and thus be a pattern to his people in all things. Instead of making himself like them, he knows that they want to be like him,

2. It is the very importance of those fundamental natural virtues which prompts the Bishop to inquire about your family, because the first formation you receive at home has always a decisive influence on your future. You know what importance philosophers and moralists of today attach to the phenomenon of psychological heredity. The Church knew long before their theories and discoveries were advanced, that she had to be very careful about the extraction of her priests. Do you know why she shows a preference for families of a modest and humble station in life?* Because she knows that the fundamental virtues of the priesthood find there an atmosphere more favorable to their development, and that they are most efficaciously taught by those admirable, sometimes heroic parents, who, unmindful of their own comfort, rear, at the cost of assiduous labors, of bitter tears, not to say of their own blood and life, a numerous and thoroughly Christian family. Here, indeed, self-denial and devotedness and true love are object-lessons the more vividly impressed upon our young minds, because they are given by those whom we love most.

and would have him in all things, such as they may look up to and admire. And so he watches and strives, weeding out of himself all that is low or weak, or unworthy, and cultivating what is noblest and best, according to the injunction of the Apostle to the Philippians (iv, 8): *For the rest, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, any praise of discipline, think on these things.*"—Very Rev. J. B. HOGAN, S.S., *Daily Thoughts*, p. 181–182.

*Says the Council of Trent:

"Pauperum autem filios præcipue eligi vult, nec tamen ditiorum excludit" (Sess. 23, *De Reform.* Cap. 18).

3. Such homes are the good soil where the divine seed of priestly vocation will not fail to grow. In such homes, loving friends bending over the little form starting its earthly pilgrimage, well may say with the relatives of St. John the Baptist: "*Quis, putas, puer iste erit?*" The answer is that of Zachary indeed: "*Propheta Altissimi vocaberis.*" *Vocaberis!* he is called, and twenty years hence, he will answer with the full generosity of his heart: "*Ecce venio.*"

Who pronounced for the first time these words "*Ecce venio*"? Our divine Saviour. He was really called to the priesthood: "*Non semetipsum clarificavit ut Pontifex fieret, sed qui vocatur a Deo, tanquam Aaron.*" For though he was essentially priest and mediator as a God-Man, still His human nature—even though His body were formed of the most pure substance of the Blessed Virgin Mary—had no right to demand to be assumed by the Son of God. His vocation to the priesthood is the divine decree by which His human nature was predestined for the hypostatic union.

Our Lord could have been priest alone; His infinite sacrifice could have been applied without our ministry; but He loved us so much that He willed to associate men with His divine work of Redemption. . . . And one day His voice was heard by a young man: he was asked to sacrifice all the joys and hopes of this life, to preach the Gospel, to convert and save souls. This young man listens to the voice, he prays, he consults, he examines: and he receives from his director this consoling answer: It is really God who calls you to the priesthood, to help Him in the work of the salvation of souls. He wants you to be mediator between Heaven and earth, to speak to men

of God, to speak to God of men and of their needs. I know all the weaknesses of your soul, since you opened it to me in all candor and sincerity; but I trust your good intentions: go bravely on; answer the call of your Bishop; take this first step towards the Altar. And this young man in the generosity of his soul answers: "*Ecce ego, Domine, quia vocasti me.*" I come since Thou hast called me.

Adsum! Noble answer to many questions: *Diligis me plus his?* etc. Sublime dialogue of love and devotedness! Be sure that your answer be one of devotedness and love! *Adsum!* I come to perform Thy will. I am ready for the work, ready for the daily sacrifice and immolation: *Paratus sum mori tecum.* I am ready to give myself up entirely to Thy service. "*Adsum!*" And the Angels of God rejoice that in the sanctuary such a step is now taken and that a new elect is about to be consecrated to God.

2. Consecration of the Cleric

The Bishop also rejoices and it is a word of blessing that falls from his lips, "*Sit nomen Domini benedictum!*" He then proceeds with the consecration of the cleric. The word cleric means portion, inheritance. A contract is about to be concluded: the cleric will become the inheritance of God, and God the inheritance of the cleric. Let us hear the authentic terms and wording of this compact.

It begins with a prayer—the ordination is but a long prayer. The Bishop requests all the faithful to pray to God for those young men who are about to make their generous offering. "Love," says the Bishop, "presses them. They hasten to give a proof of it by the symbolical

sacrifice of their hair. They want to consecrate themselves entirely to Our Lord. This symbolic action will be a public attestation that they belong no longer to the world, that they renounce entirely its frivolities and belong exclusively to God, even as Our Lord, in his Incarnation was separated from earthly things and consecrated entirely to God."

The Bishop fears lest the world might try to frighten or to seduce this young heart so full of life, even under a cassock, the symbol of death; and he invokes the Spirit of God, the Spirit of strength; then against the powers of darkness, he invokes the Spirit of light, and expresses the wish that this young cleric should walk always in the splendors of faith.

This moment, indeed, is solemn: the clerics come to the Bishop to bend their heads beneath his hand, to have their hair cut in the form of a cross, whilst, in their burning heart, burst forth the words of the consecration: "*Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ et calicis mei! Tu es qui restitues hæreditatem meam mihi.*" In the meantime the choir sings the beautiful psalm from which these words are taken, the Psalm *Conserva me.*

This psalm expresses mostly the obligations of the cleric and his hopes. The first part only is sung at the ordination; the rest, it seems, could be used by the cleric in silent thanksgiving.

Conserva me . . . quoniam speravi in te, or rather according to the Hebrew text, because I have taken my refuge in Thee. I have said Thou art my God: outside of Thee, I deem nothing dear or precious to my heart: Thou art my only good.

The verse "*Sanctis qui sunt in terra ejus*" is the trans-

lation of a Hebrew text which seems to have suffered some alteration. Perhaps the meaning would amount to this: To the many idols which they worship in the land I will never have recourse; nor will I ever take part in their cruel and licentious rites.

The Lord alone is my portion: *Dominus pars hæreditatis meæ et calicis mei.* Let others have the honours, the riches, the comforts of this life: to my heart this is all vanity and misery; my share is the Lord: He is mine: I belong to Him. *Dominus pars hereditatis meæ.*

Tu es qui restitues hæreditatem meam mihi, or rather *conservabis hæreditatem meam mihi.* In his inmost soul, the young cleric may well repeat: *hæreditas mea præclara est mihi.*

We feel inclined to say: *Optimam partem elegit.* After all, it seems right to say: You have chosen. Is it not in the fulness of your liberty that you placed a barrier between the world and yourself? Is it not the consciousness of this choice which makes you so happy and causes those present at the ceremony to say that you have chosen the best part. All that is very true, gentlemen, however the word of our Lord is still more true, and you will hear this word spoken to your heart: *Non vos me elegistis, sed ego elegi vos.* I have chosen you, I have invited you and you have accepted the invitation, and your are come to be enrolled in the clergy. Now you belong entirely to Our Lord. People regard you as the servants of God, and such is also your own conviction: *Servus tuus sum ego.*

Still you receive a crown! *Ut collocet eum cum principibus populi sui.* Lofty is your calling: exalted also should be your perfection. If Our Lord were to give you the choice between a crown of roses and a crown of thorns,

you should not hesitate a single instant. The latter is the crown of Jesus, our Master. This should also be our crown. Sacrifice and suffering you should be ready to accept, and the bitterer be the chalice, the more fervently should you thank Our Lord, for sharing with you His Passion. *Dominus pars calicis mei!* Love demands all this, and love it is that pervades this oblation.

Comas capitum pro amore divino deposuimus, says the Bishop and in the following prayer he asks for you a special grace of Our Lord: *ut in tua dilectione perpetuo maneant.*

Perpetuo! Does he mean that in the tonsure, as in subdeaconship, your engagement is irrevocable? As a matter of fact the bonds of subdeaconship are indissoluble, like those of Matrimony. But if tonsure cannot be compared with Matrimony, we may say that it is the betrothal which prepares for the definitive union. This is not an invention of mine: I merely quote the words of the Council of Trent: *Ut homines ad matrimonium sponsalibus præparari solent, ita cum, tonso capite Deo dicantur, tanquam aditus ad ordinis sacramentum aperitur.* Now, betrothed of Christ, would you consent to break your engagement? The bonds of betrothal are not indissoluble, it is true, but under what condition does the matrimonial tie remain unbroken? Is it not when it is sealed by love? Should that condition be absent, we know what passions can do! So for the subdeacon; if he does not love his divine friend, is there any human law which would prevent him from being a recreant? Love therefore is the only binding power, as says St. Paul: *"Certus sum quia neque mors, neque vita . . . . . poterit nos separare a caritate Dei."*

Only by such bonds is the cleric engaged, bonds of love:

but this is enough to make them really everlasting. May he be faithful to his virginal troth! *In tua dilectione perpetuo maneant, et eos sine macula in sempiternum custodias.*

Sine macula! This idea of purity introduces the vesting with the surplice, the symbol of innocence. We have reached now the last part of the ceremony: the explanation of the compact which has just been made. The Psalm *Domini est terra* is chanted at this juncture, teaching us who is the Lord, and what should be the qualities of soul of this young cleric, now betrothed to the divine Spouse.

> Domini est terra et plenitudo ejus,
> Orbis terrarum et universi qui habitant in ea.

Such is the Lord Almighty, the author and the Master of all, who becomes the portion of the young cleric. It is He who has established the laws of creation and sustains everything by His mighty power.

Now what should be the young cleric to the divine Spouse?

> Quis ascendet in montem Domini?
> Aut quis stabit in loco sancto ejus?
> Innocens manibus et mundo corde.

It may not be the baptismal innocence; it must be at least the solid virtue and generous firmness of a soul sincerely repentant.

> Hic accipiet benedictionem a Domino;
> Et misericordiam a Deo salutari suo.

Now the celestial powers are invited to lift up the gates of the Holy priesthood, for lo! the king draws nigh!

The royal betrothal is an accomplished fact. "One step is enough" for the young cleric, because this step is so glorious, leading as it does towards the eternal priesthood:

> Quis est iste rex gloriæ?
> Dominus fortis et potens,
> Dominus potens in prælio,
> Dominus virtutum, ipse est Rex gloriæ.

What must God have in store for us, if Holy Mother Church describes our entrance into the Sanctuary in such glowing colors! *Nimis honorati sunt amici tui Deus! Nimis confortatus est principatus eorum.*

3. The Sacred Habit

The Redeemer in His divine Incarnation put on our human nature as a vestment: *qui cum in forma Dei esset . . . . habitu inventus est ut homo.* This is rather a mourning dress. For Jesus comes into this world only to die. The dowry which He receives on the day of His nuptials with human nature is the possibility of suffering and dying. Without a human body, God could never have done that. Now our casssock is for us a perpetual application of the lesson given by our Lord in His Incarnation. We have to die every day, to renounce ourselves, our nature, our evil inclinations, and offer ourselves as victims of expiation for our own sins and for those of the world.

But death does not go without life. Above your cassock you wear the surplice, symbol of the new life, which you have to live. *Hoc sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu.* After all it is not so much purity which is expressed by this

immaculate vestment as the new life, the supernatural life, a life of faith, of intimate union with our Lord.

Mors et vita: such is the twofold idea expressed by our sacred habit. It should not be empty and meaningless, but rather the sincere and faithful expression of our inward dispositions of heart.

"*Mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo*," said St. Paul. A lofty motto for the cleric! We do not belong to the world; everything worldly is out of place in us. Our dress tells us plainly that we are separated from the world and its vanity. We should never be ashamed to appear as ecclesiastics, to speak, to act, to live as such. What would we say of a soldier ashamed of his flag! Nothing should remain half done. If we renounce the world, we have to renounce it entirely, and never allow the spirit of the world to be associated with the spirit of Jesus Christ. There is an absolute repugnance between the two. Everybody expects from us gravity, modesty, and perfect manners. Luxury, studied affectation in the dress of a priest, produces always a very bad impression. We do not realize how potent an influence our mere external appearance may exercise on souls.

This implies mortification, both internal and external, for there is great mortification in a perpetual self-restraint; but this mortification is the very condition of our supernatural life, of that life of holiness which is symbolized by the surplice. Every time we put on our surplice we should say with sincere and earnest desire: *Indue me, Domine, novum hominem.* Perhaps, our baptismal robe has not been preserved immaculate; we weep over its defilement. This new garb of innocence should never be desecrated. Indeed, we shall meet with many dangers,

terrible temptations at times: we should rather die than prove unfaithful. *Potius mori quam fœdari.* What consolation if on our death bed, when Jesus comes to us for the last time, we can say to Him: Behold! O Lord, my surplice as pure as when I received it on the day of my first ordination! *Ut eos sine macula in sempiternum custodias.*

Finally, the Bishop addresses a word of warning to the clerics: *De foro Ecclesiæ facti estis:* you are incorporated into the clergy. This, indeed, is a great honour: to be incorporated into the family of the Apostles, of St. Peter, of St. John, of St. Paul, of St. Charles, St. Francis de Sales, St. Vincent de Paul. From the last cleric to the Pope, we all share in the great privilege expressed by these words: *De foro Ecclesiæ facti estis.* What interest therefore should we not take in all that is of interest to the Church, her propagation, her missions, domestic and foreign, her development in our land and in every land, in all that concerns her welfare!

As a consequence of this dignity, you have a clear duty says the Bishop: *Deo placere studeatis.* This is his parting word to the newly made clerics: *Deo placere studeatis!* To please God, but this is a perpetual act of love. I find this idea expressed in a very striking manner in a book of rare merit. "Every true priest . . is as St. Paul loves to call himself, the servant, the slave of Christ, engaged in His personal service, bound to carry out His will in all things and to know no other law. '*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*' This is the keynote of his life. He aspires to the priesthood, not for the comforts, or the emoluments, or the credit it may bring with it, not even primarily for his own spiritual benefit, but for the loving and devoted service of Him whose voice he recognized in the call. He

joins the ranks to be the soldier of Christ, to fight His battles, and to bear bravely the hardships of the campaign. The prospect of pleasures to forego, of sacrifices to make, far from deterring, invites him all the more, since it gives him a precious opportunity of proving his devotion. . . . . The priest . . . . realizes from his first awakening that he is not free to do as he likes, with the new day that dawns upon him. His first thought therefore reverts to his Master, and his first concern is to know what He expects of him. This is one of the objects of his morning meditation, to look into the day that is before him, and to measure the work that he is expected to do for the honour of Christ and for the good of souls. '*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*?' Happy the priest who, in great things and in small, is thus ever guided by a sense of loyalty to his Lord."*

To please God is just what our Lord did on earth: *Ecce venio ut faciam voluntatem tuam.* Indeed, when this divine victim was offered in the Temple by the hands of Mary it was to please God. The Fathers ask: Why did Mary offer Our Lord? They answer: Because the victim had to be offered by its owner. But if such is the law, should not Mary intervene in our oblation? Do we not belong to Mary, our Mother? Surely our offering will be more agreeable to God, if it is presented by our immaculate Mother; and if we should find any hardship in making our oblation, the maternal hand of Mary will render the sacrifice easier: *In simplicitate cordis mei lætus obtuli universa.*

Through Mary, through the help of this blessed Mother, we will be faithful to our promises. To give one's self is

*Very Rev. T. B. Hogan, S. S., *Daily Thoughts*, ch. xx, The Servant of Christ, p. 81–82.

comparatively easy; a more difficult task is never to take back this donation in the details of our life. To act in this way would be mean, indeed. We should rather give our heart to God as a mass of incense, and every morning detach a grain of it and offer it on the altar of sacrifice. *Ut Deo placere studeatis*, and our holocaust will ascend to God as a sweet perfume: *in odorem suavitatis*. . . .

The immolation will follow close upon the offertory, and to the betrothal will soon succeed the definitive wedding. The spouse must be adorned, the victim must be purified and fattened: *Holocaustum tuum pingue fiat!* Of Christ leaving the Temple, Tertullian said, in his energetic language: *Saginandus ad victimam*. The cleric has to make the apprenticeship of his immolation; this will be the second phase of the sacrifice. *Saginandus ad victimam.*

DE MINORIBUS ORDINIBUS

QUATUOR minores Ordines dari possunt extra Missarum solemnia diebus Dominicis, et festivis: sed in mane tantum.

Ordinandi omnes ad quatuor minores Ordines esse debent superpelliceis induti, cum candela in manu dextera.

De Ordinatione Ostiariorum

Pro Ostiariis ordinandis parentur claves Ecclesiæ. Pontifex, Clericis ordinatis, surgit, et cum mitra, ad sedem, seu ad faldistorium, in cornu Epistolæ, revertitur; ubi, deposita mitra, et ad altare conversus, oblato sibi libro, cantat primam Collectam; deinde sedet, reassumit mitram, et cantatur prima Lectio. Interim accedunt duo Capellani, cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem; qui sedens cum mitra, ex eo legit Lectionem ipsam. Quibus finitis, surgit Pontifex, et cum mitra ad faldistorium, ante medium altaris sibi præparatum, proficiscitur, et in illo sedet renibus altari versis. Archidiaconus vocat Ordinandos, dicens:

Accédant, qui ordinándi sunt ad offícium Ostiariórum.

Et mox Notarius singulos nominatim vocat, et quilibet respondet:

Adsum.

Omnibus in superpelliceis cum candelis in manibus coram Pontifice genuflexis, Pontifex admonet illos, dicens:

Suscepturi, fílii charíssimi, offícium Ostiariórum, vidéte, quæ in domo Dei ágere debeátis. Ostiárium opórtet percútere cymbalum, et cámpanam; aperíre Ecclésiam, et sacrárium; et librum aperíre ei qui prædicat. Providéte ígitur, ne per negligéntiam vestram, illárum rerum, quæ

intra Ecclésiam sunt, áliquid depéreat; certísque horis domum Dei aperiátis fidélibus: et semper claudátis infidélibus. Studéte étiam, ut, sicut materiálibus clávibus Ecclésiam visíbilem aperítis, et cláuditis; sic, et invisíbilem Dei Domum, corda scílicet fidélium, dictis et exémplis vestris claudátis diábolo, et aperiátis Deo; ut divína verba, quæ audíerint, corde retíneant, et ópere cómpleant, quod in vobis Dóminus perfíciat per misericórdiam suam.

Deinde, Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus claves Ecclesiæ, quas successive manu dextera singuli* tangant, Pontifice dicente:

Sic ágite quasi redditúri Deo ratiónem pro iis rebus, quæ his clávibus recludúntur.

Post hæc Archidiaconus, sive alius Archidiaconi vice fungens, ducit eos ad ostium Ecclesiæ, et facit illos claudere, et aperire; tradit etiam eis funem campanarum, faciens eos campanas pulsare, deinde illos reducit ad Pontificem; quibus coram Pontifice genua flectentibus, stans cum mitra Pontifex versus ad ipsos Ordinatos, dicit:

Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, fratres charíssimi, supplíciter deprecémur, ut hos fámulos suos bene ✠ dícere dignétur, quos in offícium Ostiariórum elígere dignátus est; ut sit eis fidelíssima cura in domo Dei, diébus, ac nóctibus, ad distinctiónem certárum horárum, ad invocándum nomen Dómini, adjuvánte Dómino nostro Jesu Christo: Qui cum eo vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum, mitra deposita, stans Pontifex, et conversus ad altare dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri subjungunt:

*Duo vel tres simul.

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Et statim versus ad illos genuflexos, stans sine mitra, dicit:

Domine sancte, Pater omnípotens ætérne Deus, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos in offícium Ostiariórum: ut inter janitóres Ecclésiæ tuo páreant obséquio, et inter eléctos tuos, partem tuæ mereántur habére mercédis. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc Ordinati, suggerente Archidiacono redeunt ad loca sua.

De Ordinatione Lectorum

Pro lectoribus ordinandis paretur liber lectionum.

Ostiariis ordinatis, Pontifex reassumpta mitra, accedit ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium a parte Epistolæ. Interim cantatur primum Graduale, vel primum *Alleluia*, si sit infra octavam Pentecostes; et Pontifex sedens cum mitra, oblato sibi libro, et candela, legit dictum Graduale vel *Alleluia*. Quibus dictis, surgit, deposita mitra, et versus ad altare cantat secundam Collectam. Tum sedet, reassumpta mitra, et cantatur secunda Lectio. Interim accedunt duo Capellani cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem, qui sedens cum mitra, ex eo legit Lectionem ipsam. Quibus dictis, Pontifex revertitur ad faldistorium ante medium altaris positum, ubi sedet cum mitra, et Lectores vocantur per Archidiaconum, hoc modo:

Accédant qui ordinándi sunt ad offícium Lectórum.

Et mox nominantur per Notarium, ut supra dictum est. Quibus coram Pontifice, cum candelis in manibus, genuflexis, Pontifex admonet eos, dicens:

Electi, fílii charíssimi, ut sitis Lectóres in domo Dei nostri, offícium vestrum agnóscite, et impléte. Potens

est enim Deus, ut áugeat vobis grátiam perfectiónis ætérnæ. Lectórem síquidem opórtet légere ei qui prædicat; et lectiónes cantáre; et benedícere panem, et omnes fructus novos. Studéte ígitur verba Dei, vidélicet lectiónes sacras, distíncte et apérte ad intelligéntiam et ædificatiónem fidélium, absque omni mendácio falsitátis, proférre; ne véritas divinárum lectiónum, incúria vestra, ad instructiónem audiéntium corrumpátur. Quod autem ore légitis, corde credátis, atque ópere compleátis; quátenus auditóres vestros, verbo páriter et exémplo vestro, docére possítis. Ideóque, dum légitis, in alto loco Ecclésiæ stetis, ut ab ómnibus audiámini et videámini, figurántes positióne corporáli, vos in alto virtútum gradu debére conversári; quátenus cunctis, a quibus audímini, et vidémini cœléstis vitæ formam præbeátis; quod in vobis Deus ímpleat per grátiam suam.

Deinde Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus Codicem, de quo lecturi sunt, quem manu dextra tangunt, dicens:

Accipite, et estóte verbi Dei relatóres, habitúri, si fidéliter et utíliter implevéritis offícium vestrum, partem cum iis, qui verbum Dei bene administravérunt ab inítio.

Quibus expeditis, et illis genuflexis, Pontifex stans cum mitra versus ad eos, dicit:

Oremus, fratres charíssimi, Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, ut super hos fámulos suos, quos in órdinem Lectórum dignátur assúmere, bene ✠ dictiónem suam cleménter effúndat; quátenus distíncte legant, quæ in Ecclésia Dei legénda sunt, et eádem opéribus ímpleant. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium suum, qui cum eo vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum Pontifex, mitra deposita, stans conversus ad altare, dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri subjungunt:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Deinde conversus ad Ordinatus genuflexos, dicit, sine mitra:

Domine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos in offícium Lectórum; ut assiduitáte lectiónum instrúcti sint, atque ordináti; et agénda dicant, et dicta ópere ímpleant; ut in utróque sanctæ Ecclésiæ, exémplo sanctitátis suæ, cónsulant. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Postea, suggerente Archidiacono, redeunt Ordinati ad loca sua.

De Ordinatione Exorcistarum

Pro Exorcistis ordinandis paretur liber exorcismorum, cujus loco dari potest Pontificale, vel Missale.

Lectoribus ordinatis, Pontifex reassumpta mitra, accedit ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium, ad cornu Epistolæ, ubi sedens cum mitra, oblato sibi libro, et candela, legit secundum Graduale, vel secundum *Alleluia*, si sit infra octavam Pentecostes. Interim cantatur a choro ipsum Graduale, vel *Alleluia*. Quo finito, surgit Pontifex, deposita mitra, et versus ad altare cantat tertiam Collectam. Tum sedet, reassumpta mitra, et cantatur tertia Lectio. Interim accedunt duo Capellani cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem, qui ex eo legit Lectionem ipsam. Quibus dictis, revertitur ad faldistorium ante altare, et sedet cum mitra. Exorcistæ vero vocantur per Archidiaconum modo consueto, dicendo:

Accédant, qui ordinándi sunt ad offícium Exorcistárum.

Et ipsi singulatim nominantur per Notarium, ut prius dictum est. Quibus coram Pontifice cum candelis in manibus genuflexis, Pontifex admonet eos, dicens:

Ordinandi, fílii charíssimi, in offícium Exorcistárum, debétis nóscere quid suscípitis. Exorcístam étenim opórtet abjícere dæmones; et dícere pópulo, ut, qui non commúnicat, det locum, et aquam in ministério fúndere. Accípitis ítaque potestátem imponéndi manum super energúmenos, et per impositiónem mánuum vestrárum, grátia Spíritus sancti, et verbis exorcísmi pellúntur spíritus immúndi a corpóribus obséssis. Studéte ígitur, ut sicut a corpóribus aliórum dæmones expéllitis, ita a mentibus, et corpóribus vestris, omnem immundítiam, et nequítiam ejiciátis; ne illis succumbátis, quos ab áliis vestro ministério, effugatis. Díscite per offícium vestrum vítiis imperáre; ne in moribus vestris áliquid sui juris inimícus váleat vindicáre. Tunc étenim recte in áliis, dæmónibus imperábitis, cum prius in vobis, eórum multímodam nequítiam superátis. Quod vobis Dóminus ágere concédat per Spíritum suum sanctum.

Post hæc Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus librum, in quo scripti sunt exorcismi, cujus loco tradi potest Pontificale, vel Missale, quem manu dextera tangunt, Pontifice dicente:

Accipite, et commendáte memóriæ, et habéte potestátem imponéndi manus super energúmenos, sive baptizátos, sive catechúmenos.

Postea vero, omnibus devote genuflexis, Pontifex, cum mitra stans, dicit:

Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, fratres charíssimi, súpplices deprecémur, ut hos fámulos suos bene ✠ dícere dignétur, in officíum Exorcistárum; ut sint spirituáles

imperatóres, ad abjiciéndos dæmones de corpóribus obséssis, cum omni nequítia eórum multiformi. Per unigénitum fílium suum Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, qui cum eo vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum conversus ad altare, deposita mitra, dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri subjungunt:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Et mox conversus ad Ordinatos genuflexos, dicit:

Domine sancte Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos in offícium Exorcistárum; ut per impositiónem mánuum, et oris offícium, potestátem, et impérium hábeant spíritus immúndos coercéndi; ut probábiles sint médici Ecclésiæ tuæ, grátia curatiónum, virtutéque cœlésti confirmáti. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculorum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc, suggerente Archidiacono, redeunt ad loca sua.

De Ordinatione Acolythorum

Pro Acolythis ordinandis parentur candelabrum cum cereo extincto, et urceolus vacuus pro vino, pro Sacramento.

EXORCISTIS ordinatis, Pontifex, reassumpta mitra, accedit ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium, ad cornu Epistolæ, ubi sedens cum mitra, oblato sibi libro, et candela, legit tertium Graduale, vel tertium *Alleluia*, si sit infra Octavam Pentecostes. Interim a choro cantatur ipsum Graduale, vel *Alleluia*. Quo finito, surgit Pontifex, deposita mitra, et versus ad altare, cantat quartam Collectam. Tum sedet, reassumpta mitra, et cantatur

quarta Lectio. Interim accedunt duo Capellani cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem, qui ex eo legit Lectionem ipsam. Quibus dictis, Pontifex revertitur ad faldistorium, ante altare, ubi sedet cum mitra. Acolythi vero vocantur per Archidiaconum.

Accédant qui ordinándi sunt ad offícium Acolythórum.

Et mox nominantur per Notarium, ut supra. Quibus coram Pontifice cum candelis in manibus genuflexis, Pontifex admonet eos, dicens:

Suscepturi, fílii charíssimi, offícium Acolythórum, pensáte quod suscípitis. Acólythum étenim opórtet ceroferárium ferre; luminária Ecclésiæ accéndere, vinum et aquam ad Eucharistíam ministráre. Studéte ígitur suscéptum offícium digne implére. Non enim Deo placére potéritis, si lucem Deo mánibus præferéntes, opéribus tenebrárum inserviátis, et per hoc áliis exémpla perfídiæ præbeátis. Sed sicut veritas dicit: Lúceat lux vestra coram homínibus, ut vídeant ópera vestra bona, et glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in cœlis est. Et sicut Apóstolus Paulus ait: In médio natiónis pravæ et pervérsæ, lucéte sicut luminária in mundo, verbum vitæ continéntes. Sint ergo lumbi vestri præcíncti, et lucérnæ ardéntes in mánibus vestris, ut fílii lucis sitis. Abjiciátis ópera tenebrárum, et induámini arma lucis. Erátis enim aliquándo ténebræ, nunc autem lux in Dómino. Ut fílii lucis ambuláte. Quæ sit vero ista lux, quam tantópere incúlcat Apóstolus, ipse demónstrat, subdens: Fructus enim lucis est, in omni bonitáte et justítia, et veritáte. Estóte ígitur sollíciti, in omni justítia, bonitáte, et veritate; ut, et vos, et álios, et Dei Ecclésiam illuminétis. Tunc étenim in Dei sacrifício digne vinum suggerétis, et aquam, si vos ipsi Deo sacrifícium, per castam vitam, et bona ópera, oblláti fuéritis. Quod vobis Dóminus concédat per misericórdiam suam.

Post hæc Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus candelabrum cum candela extincta; quod successive manu dextera singuli, tangant.* Pontifice dicente:

Accipite ceroferárium, cum céreo, et sciátis vos ad accendénda Ecclésiæ luminária mancipári, in nómine Dómini. ℟. Amen.

Tunc accipit, et tradit eis urceolum vacuum, quem similiter tangere debent, dicens communiter omnibus:

Accipite urcéolum, ad suggeréndum vinum, et aquam in Eucharistíam Sánguinis Christi, in nómine Dómini. ℟. Amen.

Postea, eis genuflexis permanentibus, Pontifex stans cum mitra versus ad eos, dicit:

Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, fratres charíssimi, supplíciter deprecémur, ut hos fámulos suos bene ✠ dícere dignétur in órdine Acolythórum; quátenus lumen visíbile mánibus præferéntes, lumen quoque spirituále móribus præbeant: adjuvánte Dómino nostro Jesu Christo, qui cum eo, et Spíritu sancto vivit, et regnat Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum Pontifex ad altare se convertens, deposita mitra, stans, dicit:

Oremus.

Et ministri:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Et mox Pontifex conversus ad eosdem genuflexos, dicit:

Domine sancte Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, qui per Jesum Christum Fílium tuum Dóminum nostrum, et

*Tangunt candelabrum pollice manus dextræ, et candelam indice.

Apóstolos ejus, in hunc mundum lumen claritátis tuæ misísti; quique ut mortis nostræ antíquum aboléres chirógraphum, gloriosíssimæ illum crucis vexíllo affígi, ac sánguinem, et aquam ex látere illíus pro salúte géneris humáni efflúere voluísti, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos in offícium Acolythórum; ut ad accendéndum lumen Ecclésiæ tuæ, et ad suggeréndum vinum, et aquam ad conficiéndum sánguinem Christi Fílii tui in offerénda Eucharistía, sanctis altáribus tuis fidéliter subminístrent. Accénde, Dómine, mentes eórum, et corda, ad amórem grátiæ tuæ, ut illumináti vultu splendóris tui, fidéliter tibi in sancta Ecclésia desérviant. Per eúmdem Christum Dóminum nostrum. ℟. Amen.

Orémus

Domine sancte Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, qui ad Móysen, et Aaron locútus es, ut accenderéntur lucérnæ in tabernáculo testimónii, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos: ut sint Acolythi in Ecclésia tua. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. ℟. Amen.

Orémus

Omnípotens sempitérne Deus, fons lucis, et orígo bonitátis, qui per Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, lumen verum, mundum illumināsti, ejúsque passiónis mystério redemísti, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos fámulos tuos, quos in offícium Acolythórum consecrámus, poscéntes cleméntiam tuam, ut eórum mentes, et lúmine sciéntiæ illústres, et pietátis tuæ rore írriges; ut ita accéptum ministérium, te auxiliánte, péragant, quáliter ad ætérnam remuneratiónem perveníre mereántur. Per eúmden Christum Dóminum nostrum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc, suggerente Archidiacono, Ordinati redeunt ad loca sua.

MINOR ORDERS

Dominus memor sit omnis sacrificii tui, et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat.

May the Lord be mindful of all thy sacrifices, and may thy whole burnt-offering be made fat.—Ps. XIX, 4.

The young cleric hopes some day to be a priest: *Introibo ad altare Dei, ad Deum qui lætificat juventutem meam,* does he say anticipating greater privileges in the subsequent ordinations. But are not his ambitions too exalted; does he possess a sufficient amount of generosity, devotedness and purity to make his holocaust perfect? This the Church wishes to ascertain, and invites him to ascend four consecutive steps the better to train him for the spirit of sacrifice so essential for the priesthood.

Tota vita Christi crux fuit et martyrium. Christ had always before His eyes His mission of Redeemer. He never lost sight of Calvary, continually preparing for His immolation. Long and wonderful preparation! thirty years of which were spent in silence, recollection, obscurity! Then for three years He travelled over Galilee and Judea with His disciples, going up to the house of God, preaching the good tidings, claiming that the prophecies were fulfilled in Him, showing Himself a strong opponent of Satan, and declaring Himself to be the light of the world. But always and everywhere He was a victim, and His dispositions of self-sacrifice were continually increasing in perfection. *Proficiebat!*

Progress, and especially progress in self-sacrifice is the programme of the cleric who receives the minor orders. In the rites of these four orders, the Church develops for him this programme, giving him at the same time powers symbolical of the great offices of the priesthood. The proper care of the house of God and everything connected with His worship, the apostolate of preaching, the ministry of confession, the offering of the most holy Sacrifice: such are the great duties of the Priest. Now the seminary is calculated to train for these offices. Therefore he who has the spirit of the minor orders, will appreciate the seminary life and follow all its regulations faithfully. Both the seminary life and minor orders should be an apprenticeship of the sacerdotal functions. "The trial of the priestly sacrifice, imposed upon those in minor orders, is nothing more than the faithful observance of the duties prescribed by the rules. It is by submitting generously that the cleric will merit to become a victim worthy of being sacrificed to God."*

But just as there is nothing striking or dramatic about the ordinary routine of seminary life, so the minor orders very often are not appreciated at their true value. Hence, sometimes, owing to a lack of proper esteem, a candidate may be apt to neglect his preparation. The minor orders should be considered in the light of faith. The Saints, our models, have always shown a high regard for them, some of them thinking that they should never aspire to any higher dignity, being only too glad to spend their whole life as simple lectors or acolytes.

If they are called *minor*, it is not because they have no

*Branchereau, *l. c.*, p. 328.

importance, but simply because they are inferior to the sacred orders. I will not discuss here the question whether they are a sacrament or not.* From a practical point of view, which is ours now, it is enough to know that the grace will be given to us in proportion to our preparation and dispositions, and of course exclusively so, viz. "*ex opere operantis*" if they are but sacramentals. God intends to give us by degrees the sacerdotal grace. When receiving the minor orders we receive some graces for the proper exercise of those priestly functions which correspond to the symbolism of the minor orders:† a pious exorcist will become a wise and holy confessor, whilst a fervent lector will develop into a successful preacher. If too often negligences and defects are noticed in a priest on these points, I am inclined to believe those are due to an insufficient preparation for the minor orders during the seminary course.

*"Longe probabilius, ne dicamus certum, et apud recentiores passim receptum est alias ordinationes infra diaconatum non esse verum sacramentum; sunt enim institutæ ab Ecclesia."—GASPARRI: *Tractatus canonicus de sacra Ordinatione* I, 41.

†"Secular dignities bring nothing to the soul of the recipient, but sacred authority comes laden with divine gifts. With it is imparted to the soul a twofold grace; a grace of sanctification which lifts her up to a higher sphere of divine life and brings her nearer to God; a grace of help from above, ever present, and aiding both to recognize the responsibilities which have been put upon her and to be faithful to them. In other words, a priest by the grace of his ordination, has at all times a special assistance from God to see where his duty lies and to do it. He has special impulses, special warnings as to what is suited or unsuited to his condition, an intuitive sense of the proprieties of the priesthood, and at the same time, a facility to conform to them seldom found outside that sacred calling."—VERY REV. J. B. HOGAN, *Daily Thoughts*, ch. XIX, Renovation of Spirit, p. 77–78.

Another remark to be made is that the functions of the minor orders, which were deemed to be a great honour, centuries ago,* are now often committed to laymen or sanctuary boys. But the priest has to superintend all that. He has to train altar boys and other officers; the grace to do it well should be obtained when receiving minor orders.

A last remark about minor orders, which will help you to remember more easily the explanations: In every one of them, there are two things: *honor, onus.* Some dignity, some power, some functions are entrusted to the cleric. But at the same time, and as a consequence, some obligations are imposed upon him. *Honor, onus.*

*"As regards the lectorate, one must read the thirty-eighth letter of Cyprian, a beautiful and expressive letter, in which Cyprian tells the clergy and the *plebs* of Carthage—from whom he is still exiled—of his having raised to the lectorate the young martyr Aurelius. At the outset, Cyprian excused himself for not having beforehand taken the advice of his clergy nor asked the assent of his people. (Epistula, xxxviii, 1.) Had not Aurelius the divine suffrage of his martydom? Aurelius is a mere youth: worthy as he is on account of his courage to be promoted to some higher rank of the clergy, he shall start in the lectorate.

" . . . . Interim placuit ut ab officio lectionis incipat, quia et nihil magis congruit voci quæ Deum gloriosa prædicatione confessa est quam celebrandis divinis lectionibus personare, post verba sublimia quæ Christi martyrium prolocuta sunt euangelium Christi legere unde martyres fiunt, ad pulpitum post catastam venire. . . . . Hunc igitur a me et a collegis qui præsentes aderant ordinatum sciatis." (*Ibid. 2.*)

Aurelius, then, who, as a martyr, came to the *catasta, i. e.*, to the rack, will come, as a lector, to the *pulpitum, i. e.*, to the desk. He will read in the liturgical meetings the Gospel, the divine words. The lectores are once called by Cyprian *"lectores doctorum audientium:"* a title which implies that they are attached to the priests who teach the catechumens.—P. Battiffol, *Primitive Catholicism*, p. 338.

Ostiary

In the first sentence pronounced by the Bishop, the characteristic feature of this order is described: *Videte quæ in domo Dei agere debeatis. In domo Dei:* the ostiary dwells in the house of God. This is the reason, the foundation of his dignity and of his duties. And his life should be rather an active life: *in domo Dei quæ* AGERE *debeatis.*

Three functions especially are assigned to him, according to the Pontifical: (1) *Percutere cymbalum et campanam,* (2) *Aperire Ecclesiam et sacrarium,* (3) *Librum aperire ei qui prædicat.*

Thus he is constituted the guardian of the house of God. History throws some light on functions hardly understood today. The Ostiaries had to guard the doors of the Church, in order to prevent the pagans from entering and profaning the Holy Mysteries. It was also their function to assign the proper seats in the Church to the different classes of penitents and to see that silence be kept in the sacred place. They had to announce to the faithful the day and the hour of the meetings, which demanded great prudence, during the days of persecutions, when it was of the highest importance that these meetings should not be publicly known. They were also treasurers of the Church goods, and it is to this last function that the Bishop alludes when conferring the order: *Sic agite quasi rationem reddituri pro iis rebus quæ iis clavibus recluduntur.*

Now, you might ask yourselves, how and when did Our Lord exercise such functions. The first is to convoke the faithful to the church: *percutere campanam.* Remember this word of the Psalm, "*Hodie si vocem ejus audieritis, nolite obdurare corda vestra.*" Of what voice does he

speak? *si vocem ejus*? The voice of God. But is it not in a special manner the voice of Our Blessed Saviour? Is not this voice an invitation to enter the Church? But who has a right to give such an invitation, except the founder of the Church? Is it not He who said: *Compelle intrare*? Is He not the divine Ostiary, who may use all the voices of Creation to call men to His Church, showing in this masterpiece of His love a harmony corresponding to all the cravings of the human soul;* a harmony felt and understood by all who are in good faith and do not voluntarily harden their heart: *Hodie si vocem ejus audieritis, nolite obdurare corda vestra.*

The second function of the Ostiary is to keep the keys of the Church and to guard what is contained in it. Is Our Lord a guardian? Indeed He is: *Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem.* Even, there is only one true guardian: *Nisi Dominus custodierit.* The ostiary who watches and guards, is he not this same Lord who one day expelled from the temple of God the Jews who profaned it by a vulgar trade?†

Even the last function: *aperire librum ei qui prædicat*, did not our Lord fulfil it, in the highest sense, when on the road to Emmaus, he opened for the two disciples the Messianic prophecies, which were sealed for them, and forced them to say: *Nonne cor nostrum ardens erat dum loqueretur nobis in via et aperiret Scripturas?*

Now who would say that those functions are vulgar, when under their symbolism are concealed such beauties?

*Cf. Monsabré, O. P., *Amen*, Conférences, 1890.

†Hoc officium Dominus in sua persona suscepit quando, flagello de funiculis facto, vendentes et ementes ejecit e templo.—Peter Lombard, *L. iv, Sent., d. 24.*

But to the functions correspond duties and obligations: *honor, onus.*

In one word the Bishop expresses and asks from God the virtue which is the most necessary to the Ostiary: *Ut sit eis fidelissima cura in domo Dei.* Speaking of their functions, he said: *Videte quæ agere debetis in domo Dei;* and now he calls again their attention to the house of God. *Ut sit eis fidelissima cura in domo Dei.*

Let us understand what is the house of God. It is first of all the house where He sits on a throne—He is a King; but also the house where He works—He is the Creator. Indeed, day and night, from the depths of His Tabernacle, our Lord is addressing to His Father incessant supplications, and sending rays of love to souls to touch and convert them. He works likewise through the Sacraments. Theologians describe the way the Sacraments produce their effects by a very expressive word: *Ex opere operato.* Energy is concentrated work. This efficacy of the Sacraments is due to the amount of work which Our Lord stored up in them: *Tantus labor non sit cassus,* says the Church, speaking of the work of redemption: every morning on the altar, in the house of God, our Lord continues this wonderful and fruitful work.

The house of God is the place where our Christian habits have been formed, where every day we come to offer our first thought, our first prayer, to our Saviour, and every night lay at his feet the burden of the day It is there that our sins have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb: *Beati qui lavant stolas suas in sanguine Agni*; where so often we have received His sacred flesh. It is there that you shall some day ascend the Holy Altar, and God Himself will come down into your consecrated hands.

So the canticle of the Ostiary should be very fittingly the Psalm 83: *Quam dilecta tabernacula tua!* In this Psalm as well as in the Pontifical three sentiments are described as the virtues specially befitting the Ostiary: respect, love and zeal.

1. *Respect* for the temple, profound religion* for the august Sacrament of our altars. Here the Ostiary shows his "*fidelissima cura.*" He makes his genuflexions with the greatest care, he walks in the church with piety and dignity, he abstains from talking or making any unnecessary noise. He shows likewise the greatest care for the sacred vases, the linen, the vestments. He is anxious to know all about the proper way of keeping a sacristy; like the beloved disciple of St. Jerome: *non majus, non minus negligebat officium.* Nothing is small in his eyes, when it is question of the service of God. His respect goes even to solicitude, because solicitude is love, and love for the house of God is such a natural sentiment in the heart of the Ostiary!

*"Piety is the same as what in modern language we call the religious feeling: it is what the schoolmen would call a function, if not the substance of the virtue of Religion. . . . . By piety, therefore, we understand a disposition of the soul drawing it to do homage to God, and to busy itself with what is directly meant to honour Him. . . . .

"The truly pious soul has her characteristic features. She loves prayer; she is assiduous in the practices of devotion, such as meditation, assistance at the Holy Sacrifice, frequent communion and the like. She has a taste for spiritual books, and enjoys the Lives of the Saints. She is instinctively led to devotion towards them, and in a most special manner to devotion towards the Blessed Mother of God. She loves to visit and to adorn their shrines, and still more the altar and the tabernacle."—Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, S.S., *Daily Thoughts*, ch. xxxiv, p. 135–136. The whole chapter—a model of psychological analysis—should be read.

2. *Love. Depositum custodi*, wrote St. Paul to Timothy. The same recommendation could be made to the guardian of the Blessed Sacrament. This zealous Ostiary guards lovingly his treasure. You might see him often at the foot of the altar, he is so happy near to Jesus! He never misses an occasion to visit Him, nobody succeeds in coming earlier than he to offer the actions of the day to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and at night he is the last to leave his beloved Master. Such a disposition is so priestly! It has been said rightly that our visits to the Blessed Sacrament are the thermometer of our fervency. The priest has many reasons to ascend the Holy Altar every day; the faithful wish to assist at Mass. But as to the visit it is the heart of the priest which prompts him to go and spend long and well rewarded moments before the Tabernacle. How often the faithful express their surprise that they never see the priest visiting the Blessed Sacrament, and on the contrary how edified they are when, coming to Church, they see the priest absorbed in fervent adoration.

3 Love is necessarily *zealous*, and the priest who likes to spend his time before the Blessed Sacrament likes also to attract souls and lead them to Jesus. He becomes ingenious to multiply the attractions towards the Tabernacle: solemnity of the ceremonies, tasty decorations, pictures and statues of an artistic merit, striking rendering of religious music, splendid illuminations, etc. In all these he simply follows the inclination of his heart, because he loves to repeat every day to our Lord with the earnest sincerity of his soul: *Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ*!

Lector

We read in the Gospel that in the Synagogue at Nazareth, on a certain Sabbath, after the lesson from the Pentateuch was over, Jesus ascended the steps of the pulpit. The minister drew aside the silk curtains of the painted ark which contained the sacred manuscripts and handed the roll of the Prophet Isaiah. Our Lord unrolled the volume and read the well known passage: *Spiritus Domini super me; evangelizare pauperibus misit me.* Then He developed the theme that He was Himself the Messiah, whom the great Prophet had described seven centuries before. On that day Our Lord exercised the office of Lector.*

"Lectors . . . . are very frequently referred to. The series of their epitaphs begins as early as the second century on monuments which are probably anterior to Tertullian, who is the first writer who mentions them. In the fourth century this order was preëminently the first of the ministry, and constituted a sort of probationary stage. Young clerics began their career in it, and remained lectors until they had reached an adult age, which was a necessary qualification for receiving superior orders. Most of the ecclesiastical careers of which the details are known to us began with the lectorate. Such was the case with St. Felix of Nola, St. Eusebius of Vercelli, the father of Pope Damasus, the Popes Liberius and Siricius, Messius Romulus the Deacon of Fiesole, St. Epiphanius of Pavia, and many others. It need not there-

*Hoc officium implevit Christus cum in medio Seniorum, librum Isaiæ aperiens, distincte ad intelligendum legit: Spiritus Domini super me . . . ,—Peter Lombard, *L. iv Sent., d. 24.*

fore excite surprise that this order was extremely numerous in the fourth and fifth centuries. Those whose epitaphs have come down to us had, as a general rule, reached the age of adults, but there were many young children in the corporation. Their silvery voices penetrated the vast spaces of the basilicas, and were heard by the most distant portions of the congregation. In the fulfilment of their duty, which were of a serious nature for those so tender in years, they were exposed to the temptation of playing tricks. The epitaph of Pope Liberius does not omit to call attention to the good behavior of which he gave evidence at this stage of his career; never had he been heard to read wrong words wilfully, or to change the holy text for the amusement of his giddy companions. The lectors were distributed among the parochial Churches but this did not prevent their being grouped according to regions. They came even to be constituted as a corporation (*schola lectorum*) at an early date, though the existence of this body at Rome, it is true, is not attested by any specific document. These *scholæ*, however, were to be found in other Churches, and, at Rome, the *schola cantorum*, of which there is clear evidence from the seventh century onwards, consisted mainly of lectors. The latter, it is true, were no longer employed in their liturgical functions. As the vigils had fallen into desuetude, from an early date, and as the lections in the Mass had also been reduced, as early as the fifth century, to the Epistle and Gospel, the reading of the Gospel being confined at the same time to the deacons, the lectors had but rare occasions of exercising their ministry. Such lections as were of less importance than the Gospel, and still remained in use, were assigned to subdeacons. The adult lectors

consequently disappeared, and the children of the *schola cantorum* had no longer any other function than that of singing. Hence the name *schola cantorum.*"*

In the light of history you may understand why the Bishop insists so much on the difficulties of the Lector's office: *Studete verba Dei, videlicet lectiones sacras, distincte et aperte ad intelligentiam et ædificationem fidelium, absque omni mendacio falsitatis proferre, ne veritas lectionum incuria vestra ad instructionem audientium corrumpatur.* It was very difficult to read well from the manuscripts, when for reasons of economy, there was almost no separation between the words, whilst every page was full of abbreviations which the reader had to be familiar with.

We might reduce all that the Pontifical says to the two following ideas: (1) What is the office of Lector? (2) How should we exercise it?

1. The order of Lector is received when the candidate touches the Sacred Book. The Bishop pronounces the formula: *Accipite et estote verbi Dei relatores.* The word of God is entrusted to him. He has proved to be a faithful guardian of the body of our Lord; he is then judged to be able to take care of this other treasure. It is the same God who is concealed under the Eucharistic appearances as under the material words of the Bible. You know the expressive definition of the Bible given by St. Augustine: *Cor Christi Scriptura ipsius.* The Sacred Heart is really contained in the Scriptures. What is meant by heart? It is above all the collection of our sentiments and dispositions and affections; it is love, because all the sentiments can be reduced to love. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is

*Duschesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 346–349.

the abyss of His love and consequently of all His sentiments and dispositions. Now everywhere in the Sacred Scriptures we find Jesus: in Prophecy, in the Psalms, in the Gospel, especially in the discourses preserved by St. John the Disciple whom Jesus loved. Everywhere we find Jesus, but St. John has told us that God is Charity: everywhere therefore we find charity, the love of Jesus: *Cor Christi Scriptura ipsius.* Every time we open the Sacred Book, Jesus opens His arms to press us upon His breast. Such is the book given to the Lector. *Cor Christi Scriptura ipsius: Accipite et estote verbi Dei relatores.*

2. How should we read this divine Book? *Studete verba Dei distincte et aperte legere.* This reading must be intelligible, otherwise it would be useless. What is said here of the reading of Holy Writ should be said also of preaching which, after all, ought to be a commentary on Sacred Scripture. But reading is intelligible in proportion as it is intelligent. When a reader thoroughly understands what he reads, even to the least shade of meaning, he generally conveys to his hearers the clear concepts he has in mind. Have you any idea of the labor, of the sacrifices to which stage-performers condemn themselves in order to obtain a perfect elocution? And to what purpose? To convey to the audience a vain story—perhaps an immoral thought. But what should not the Lector undertake in the line of work and endeavor, when it is a question of so lofty purpose as the one described by the Bishop: *ad intelligentiam et ædificationem fidelium?**

* "Since the members of the congregation have so much reverence for their pastor that they will not presume to admonish him of his faults in the pulpit, and since even his brothers in the priesthood

I suppose the training of the voice is perfect, the reading has been excellent, the musical part of it delightful, lovely, and through that channel the divine ideas have appeared with a new splendor. The faithful are instructed and edified. This is not all.

Quod autem ore legitis, corde credatis. To hear is not enough. Through our reading the faithful should feel our convictions, our heart. They should see plainly that this Lector is not a mere echo, but a man of strong convictions, who having realized once for all the truth

will not assume the ungrateful task of reproving him, should not his own conscience and sense of duty be a stern monitor to him? for "the just is first accuser to himself." Is it not a crime against religion for an ambassador of Christ to abuse this exemption from public criticism which he enjoys? Imagine a clergyman strutting into the pulpit and, in the sacred precincts of the temple, before a hushed congregation, delivering himself in a tiresome and perfunctory manner of some commonplace remarks, which the people have heard over and over again; becoming a *Jupiter tonans*, making up for lack of ideas by a thundering and aggressive voice; or talking throughout of dollars and cents, without any allusion to the Gospel; or indulging in general vituperation, or venting his anger on some particular parishioner under a thin disguise of language which many of his hearers, as well as the object of his assault, can easily penetrate. I can hardly conceive a spectacle more cowardly and contemptible than that of an anointed minister taking unwarrantable advantage of the immunity which his sacred office bestows on him, protected by the armor of his priestly robes, sheltering himself behind the breastworks of the pulpit, and pouring forth volleys of offensive language that he would not dare to utter to a gentleman on the streets. Such license must arouse in every honest breast sentiments of righteous indignation. The people came for bread, and they receive a stone. They came for peace and consolation, and their hearts were filled with sadness and irritation."—Cardinal Gibbons, *The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 273.

which he announces, is bent upon impressing it on his audience: *Quod ore legitis, corde credatis.*

Something more is required: *quod ore legitis . . . . opere compleatis.* St. Francis de Sales says that a mere teaching is like written music. It is very often hard to decipher it, only a few are able to do it, and to the greater number these notes mean hardly anything. But let a rich and well-trained voice interpret this written melody; immediately everyone is moved, delighted and raptured. They hardly think there might be any difficulty in it, so smoothly do those modulations succeed one another, conveying an artistic idea to the hearers. Now, says St. Francis de Sales, this is like a preacher who adds his example to his preaching. The audience may not understand perfectly the sermon, they will forget it; the example they never forget and often follow. This is why the Pontifical says: *auditores vestros verbo pariter et exemplo vestro docere possitis.*

And it is no ordinary virtue that is required. *In alto virtutum gradu conversari debetis.* Your standing in the pulpit above the audience is a symbol, *figurantes positione corporali vos in alto virtutum gradu debere conversari, quatenus cunctis . . . cœlestis vitæ formam præbeatis.*

Now how can you arrive at such a result? The first thing is to work hard. It may be said in a general way that every result is worth what it costs. Here this is absolutely true. You need an intelligent, intense and constant study. *Assiduitate lectionum instructi.* In a country such as this where a tremendous work is accomplished in the field of biblical studies, I cannot understand that those young men who receive, with the order of lector, a special mission, a

special grace for the study of Sacred Scripture should not apply themselves to that study with all the ardor, the method and zeal in their power. If we do not become the masters of biblical lore, our adversaries will supplant us and this will not be for the better. Few subjects are more vital at this moment to the cause of the Faith; few more dextrously used by those who are against the Church. Remember rather the advice of St. Jerome, the most eminent biblical scholar: *Cadentem faciem pagina sancta suscipiat.** This effort will have a glorious reward: *habituri . . . . partem cum eis qui bene ministraverunt ab initio*, says the Bishop. A share in the reward of the first Apostles St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, *qui bene ministraverunt ab initio*. A share with all those who have been faithful ministers of the word down to our own times,

*"While you are yet young, when the memory is fresh and retentive, you would do well, like Origen, to learn by heart some striking passages of Holy Writ, which you can afterwards use to advantage.

" 'All Scripture, inspired of God,' says the Apostle, 'is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every work.' You are always sure of your ground when you stand on a scriptural rock. You are always orthodox, always instructive; you are never false or exaggerated, never tedious or verbose, never frivolous or aimless; you are never preaching yourself but always 'Christ, and Him crucified.'

"Your sermons will be a torch that warms while it enlightens. You will not only captivate the minds, but you will also subdue the hearts of your hearers. 'The people will be in admiration,' not of you, but of your doctrine, because, like your Master, you will 'speak as one having authority,' and not as an actor or a rhetorician in the persuasive words of human wisdom. You will speak with an apostolic freedom of speech that will impart a supernatural force and energy to your eloquence. Your speech, like that of the Apostle, will be 'not in word only, but in power also, and in the

a Father Jogues, a Curé of Ars and so many others! What a glorious prospect!

I like to quote another word of St. Jerome. This ideal Lector, who had been troubled with so terrible temptations, used to say: *Qui amat Scripturas Sacras, vitia carnis non amabit.* This is just what we should expect, because those two loves are incompatible. But it is evident then that the best preparation for the subdeaconship consists in practicing the obligations of the Lector. By such training the victim is better prepared for the great immolation.

Holocaustum tuum pingue fiat!

Holy Ghost, and in much fulness.' "—CARDINAL GIBBONS, *The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 236.

"The book that I recommend to the minister of Christ, first and last above all others, is of course the word of God. The Bible is the only book of study that is absolutely indispensable to a priest, and hence it is appropriately called by St. Ambrose '*Liber sacerdotalis.*' He might be familiar with the whole range of ancient and modern literature, and yet his sermons would be lamentably cold and defective, if he happened to be ill-instructed in the Sacred Volume. On the other hand, if he is well versed in the Holy Scriptures, though a comparative stranger to human science, he will preach with edification and profit. The clergyman that draws his inspiration from the Sacred Text, is easily recognized by the sweet unction that flows from his lips.

"The word of God is an exhaustible treasury of heavenly science. It is the oracle that discloses to us the origin and sublime destiny of man, and the means of attaining it. It is the key that interprets his relations to his Creator. It is the foundation of our Christian faith and glorious heritage. Its moral code is the standard of our lives. If our Christian civilization is so manifestly superior to all actual and preëxisting social systems, it is indebted for its superiority to the ethical teachings of Holy Writ."—*Ibid.*, p. 226.

Exorcist

When the Lector opens the Gospel with the enthusiastic love which the grace of the ordination wrought in his heart, he reads almost at every page sentences of this kind: *Non veni mittere pacem sed gladium.* Is not Our Lord the Jesus of Bethlehem born whilst the Angels sang in the midnight Heavens: *Gloria in excelsis . . . . pax hominibus . . .* , the Redeemer who came to reconcile Heaven and earth? However we hear Him say that he came to bring separation, war and struggle. Life is a battle, and no one perhaps expressed it in a more energetic manner than St. Paul: If you take his epistle to the Romans, you may read texts like this: *Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?* And yet concupiscence is not the most terrible adversary: *non est nobis colluctatio adversus carnem et sanguinem sed adversus spiritualia nequitiæ.* Satan is the arch-enemy. He hates God, he is jealous of men, and since the very origin of mankind he has never ceased fighting and tempting, and since the nature of man is always and everywhere the very same, this infernal being has acquired wide and varied experience; he knows all the probabilities and possibilities of our falls, and he applies his knowledge with the most systematic method and the most wonderful perseverance.

St. Paul says that Our Lord came *ut dissolvat opera diaboli:* the Gospel which is only a fragmentary narrative of the life of Christ relates as many as fifteen different cures of demoniacs.*

* Hoc etiam officio usus est Christus, cum demoniacos multos sanavit. Peter Lombard *L. iv Sent., d. 24.*

If nowadays cases of diabolical possession are less frequent than in the days of old, nevertheless they are not uncommon in pagan countries. But by clever tactics, Satan thought he could succeed better in snaring men, by concealing himself. Only last century, his existence was rather questioned; never perhaps did impiety achieve more success. Today spiritualism is his great triumph. He may adopt another plan tomorrow. He has always an eye to the best opportunity: *circuit quærens quem devoret.*

Now to such destructive power the Church wishes to oppose effective resistance. To this end she created the order of Exorcist: *Exorcistam oportet abjicere dæmones.* Only Our Lord could break this infernal power. By the power of Our Lord, therefore, the Exorcist will be able to expel the devil. Therefore also the more the Exorcist will efface himself to let Our Lord act in and through him, the more powerful will he be. These two ideas sum up the lessons of the Pontifical:

1. The power of Our Lord is communicated to the Exorcist under a twofold aspect: *Spirituales imperatores . . . . probabiles medici.*

(*a*) *Imperator* means a victorious general, coming from battle. The Exorcist ought to be an "*Imperator.*" *Confidite, ego vici mundum,* says the Master: in Him we shall conquer.

(*b*) *Medicus probabilis:* a physician who gives evident proof of his capacity: *probabilis.* But life, salvation is only in the Cross. *In Cruce salus, in Cruce vita.*

The Cross then is the sword of the Exorcist, a sword which destroys and cures.

2. An Exorcist must see that Our Lord should live in him and through him. Therefore:

(*a*) A life of faith is necessary: *cui resistite fortes in fide.* During the first three centuries, there was no special order of exorcists, faith was so vivid that every Christian might presume to expel the devil. But with the weaning of faith, exorcisms had not the same effect.

The most fitting prayer of the Exorcist should then be this: *Domine, adauge nobis fidem.*

(*b*) A life of innocence is likewise necessary. *Ne in moribus vestris aliquid sui juris inimicus valeat vindicare.* If he reigns over the Exorcist, what power can the latter exercise? *Tunc recte in aliis dæmonibus imperabitis, cum prius in vobis eorum nequitiam superatis.*

(*c*) A life of humility is indispensable: *cum infirmor tunc potens sum.* The deeper the virtue of humility, the more successful will be his warfare against the devil, because Satan, the prince of pride, hates humility; nothing is more contrary to his essence: rebellion. Satan is the adversary. *In oratione et jejunio* . . . . with prayer and fasting Satan must be conquered. But prayer is humility of mind, and fasting humiliation of the body.

Nowadays, this office is not exercised. This is reserved to the Bishop who delegates a priest when necessary. But our Exorcist is entrusted with the care of Holy Water, a symbolism of the purity which he desires to procure for souls. If he meditates on the sublimity of his future ministry in the Sacrament of Penance, if he practices those great virtues of faith, purity, humility and prayer, he prepares very efficaciously for the future; he will be a zealous and useful confessor, guarding the Holy Sacrament against the unworthy, but bringing to the Holy Table all those who sincerely wish to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and need the food of the strong in this incessant struggle.

Acolyte

Ego sum lux mundi, says Our Lord. The ordination of the Acolyte is a feast of light, and when those children of light answer "*Adsum*," the text of Job comes naturally to mind: *vocavit Deus stellas et dixerunt: Adsumus.* The young Exorcist has bravely fought against the prince of darkness; now he has to represent Our Lord as the light which illuminates the world. All the rites of this ordination can be reduced to that fundamental idea.

The Bishop indicates the threefold function of the Acolyte: (1) *Ceroferarium ferre.* (2) *Luminaria accendere.* (3) *Vinum et aquam ad Eucharistiam ministrare.*

Then he insists on the obligation of teaching by example symbolised by the lighted taper and on the necessity of the spirit of sacrifice, in him who presents wine and water for the Holy Sacrifice. After that, he confers the order by the contact of the instruments. Finally, in a more solemn prayer, he invites the faithful to pray that the symbolism of the functions of the Acolytes may be realized in their life.

What is the connection between light and sacrifice? St. Paul tells us: *Eratis aliquando tenebræ, nunc autem lux in Domino;* namely before Our Lord came, the world was in darkness; men did not understand well what place they had to give to God, what place to give to the creatures and to themselves. But when Our Lord died on the Cross, it became evident that everything, even life, had to be sacrificed to God, that sin was the most horrible offense, and had to be expiated in the most thorough manner, because it was the most absurd injustice against the rights of God. So every virtue is a light; every virtue, first of

all supposes a right view of the place to be given to God and to ourselves. But it is also a sacrifice, a denial of self, because our concupiscence craves always the first place for our personal gratifications, and that even in spite of clear and positive laws of God. Therefore in order to perform works of light, to practice virtues, we have to strive, and to sacrifice ourselves—an impossible thing if we have not a great love for Our Lord; because love is the most powerful force and we absolutely need such strength.

Now we may see better the bearing of the recommendation made by the Bishop to the Acolyte. You have to live in the world, says he; it is a land of darkness, men are blind, they do not know what is due to God. Now you carry the light, the true light by the shining examples you show forth: *luceat lux vestra.**

Ut et vos et alios et Ecclesiam Dei illuminetis, adds the

*"Here we have a law, a method clearly laid down, and to be followed through all ages. Christ is the model of the priest; the priest has to be the model of the people. His example is as much a part of his ministry as preaching or administering the sacraments. . . . . This is so much the mind of the Church that in conferring each one of the orders, she is careful to impress on those she consecrates the special duty of good example. . . . . The priest . . . . has to be the embodiment of all the Christian virtues, a fragrant odor of the Gospel, a living rule for the faithful.

"The law thus laid down to priests in their preparation, the Church has in the course of ages kept steadily before them. . . . . There is nothing she seems to have more at heart than to keep her priests at such a height as that all may look to their lives for their guidance. What a glorious vocation, and what a powerful incentive to a beautiful life.—Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, S.S., *Daily Thoughts*, ch. xliii, Teaching by Example, p. 173–174. Read also ch. xlv, Spiritual influence—A little gem!

Bishop. The voice of the Bishop trembles with fear perhaps when he speaks of this darkness, of these dangers of the world. The Acolyte brings Jesus to the world, and since Jesus is a victim, the Acolyte has to show the dispositions, the virtues of a victim: *Vos ipsi Deo sacrificium per vestram vitam et bona opera oblati fueritis.*

The world will always understand self-sacrifice, as being above nature, and never will it be conquered otherwise. In the primitive church, it was thought but logical to trust the body of Our Lord to those whose mission was to carry to the world the examples and the light of Jesus. You know the touching story of St. Tarcisius, who preferred to give up his life rather than betray the sacred treasure he was carrying to the confessors of the faith in prison.

The circumstances have changed, and now the office of the Acolyte consists in serving the priest at the Altar. What intimate share he has in the sacrifice! When the priest says: *Memento omnium circumstantium qui tibi offerunt hoc sacrificium*, very often there is no one else but the Acolyte. He represents the Church who offers the sacrifice with and by the priest.

How touching this dialogue at the foot of the Altar! *Introibo ad Altare Dei.* The priest utters those words joyful, still trembling at the sight of his responsibilities. *Judica me . . . . Quare tristis es anima mea? . . . .* whilst the part of the Acolyte is an expression of hope: *Introibo . . . . Spera in Deo . . . . Quia tu es fortitudo mea.*

Being so near to the Altar, he naturally draws a lesson of purity from the stainless linen and the sacred vases. When the priest turning towards him says: *Lavabo inter*

innocentes . . . . often there is no one present but the Acolyte. How this young Acolyte must think of his approaching subdeaconship! How fully should he realize the word of the Bishop in his consecration (consecration is the term used for the ordination of the Acolyte): *Tunc digne in Dei Sacrificio vinum et aquam suggeretis, si vos ipsi Deo sacrificium per castam vitam et bona opera oblati fueritis.* Victim first; priest afterwards!

Now the major orders are at hand. The young cleric has made a two years apprenticeship of the great functions of the priesthood! Every day this pious Acolyte unites himself with the divine Victim. *Memor sit Dominus omnis sacrificii tui et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat!* The victim is well adorned.

Love for the Blessed Sacrament, earnest work, sincere humility, fervent spirit of sacrifice, such is the food of this victim. Now the victim has been fitted to be immolated as a holocaust. To-morrow we will contemplate this immolation; to-morrow our *rendez-vous* shall be on Calvary.

DE SACRIS ORDINIBUS

In Genre

SACRI, et majores Ordines sunt, Subdiaconatus, Diaconatus, et Presbyteratus, ad quos ordinati omnes debent communicare, ideo parentur pro eorum numero hostiæ parvæ consecrandæ.

De Ordinatione Subdiaconi

Pro ordinatione Subdiaconorum parentur Calix Vacuus, cum Patena superposita, Urceoli* cum manutergio, et liber Epistolarum.

Acolythis ordinatis, Pontifex, reassumpta mitra, accedit ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium ad cornu Epistolæ, ubi sedens cum mitra, oblato sibi libro, et candela, legit quartum Graduale, vel quartum *Alleluia*, si sit infra Octavam Pentecostes; interim a choro cantatur ipsum Graduale, vel *Alleluia*. Quo finito, surgit Pontifex deposita mitra, et versus ad altare cantat quintam Collectam.

Tum sedet, reassumpta mitra, et cantatur quinta Lectio. Interim accedunt duo Capellani cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem qui ex eo legit Lectionem ipsam. Quibus dictis, Pontifex revertitur ad sedem suam, ante medium altaris; et Archidiaconus versus ad ordinandos, dicit:

Accédant qui ordinándi sunt Subdiáconi.

Et Notarius unumquemque illorum vocat dicens:

N. ad títulum Ecclésiæ N.

N. ad títulum patrimónii sui.

Frater N. profé́ssus Ordinis N. ad títulum paupertátis.

Et sic de aliis: et quilibet vocatus, dicit:

Adsum.

*Cum vino et aqua.

Et accedit versus Episcopum.

Debet autem quilibet ordinandorum in Subdiaconum indutus esse amictu, non tamen super caput,* alba, et cingulo; habere manipulum in manu sinistra, tunicellam super brachio sinistro, et candelam in manu dextera.

Omnibus autem in Subdiaconos ordinandis competenti spatio coram Pontifice stantibus, Pontifex cum mitra sedens admonet eos, (nisi omnes sint religiosi, quia tunc ista admonitio omittitur) dicens:

Filii dilectíssimi, ad sacrum Subdiaconátus Ordinem promovéndi, íterum atque íterum consideráre debétis atténte, quod onus hódie ultro appétitis. Háctenus enim líberi estis, licétque vobis pro arbítrio ad sæculária vota transíre; quod si hunc Ordinem suscepéritis, ámplius non licébit a propósito resilíre; sed Deo, cui servíre, regnáre est, perpétuo famulári, et castitátem, illo adjuvánte, serváre oportébit, atque in Ecclésiæ ministério semper esse mancipátos. Proínde, dum tempus est, cogitáte, et, si in sancto propósito perseveráre placet, in nómine Dómini, huc accédite.

Illis tunc accedentibus, et coram Pontifice genuflexis, Archidiaconus vocat cæteros ordinandos, dicens:

Accédant qui ordinándi sunt Diáconi, et Presbyteri.

Quibus accedentibus, Archidiaconus ordinat eos, videlicet: Diaconandos paratos amictu, alba, cingulo, et manipulo, stolam in manu sinistra, dalmaticam super brachium sinistrum, et candelam in manu dextera tenentes, contra cornu Epistolæ altaris, faciebus altari versis; et Presbyterandos paratos amictu, alba, cingulo, manipulo, stola in modum Diaconi, planetam super brachium sinistrum, mappulam albam manu sinistra, et candelam dextera tenentes, contra faciem Pontificis, ac medium altaris, faciebus

*Sed jacente in collo tam laxe ut postea per Episcopum super caput facile imponi possit. S. R. C. 11 Sept. 1847.

similiter altari versis. Quibus sic ordinatis, Pontifex, mitram in capite tenens, procumbit super faldistorium, in superiori gradu, sive plano altaris paratum, et omnes ordinandi in locis super tapetia prosternunt se; Ministri vero, et alii astantes genuflectunt; et schola inchoat Litanias, choro respondente; vel si Officium fiat sine cantu, Pontifex dicit, Ministris et Capellanis respondentibus:

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie, eleison. Christe audi nos. Christe, exaudi nos.
Pater de cœlis Deus, Miserere nobis.
Fili Redémptor mundi Deus, miserére nobis.
Spíritus sancte Deus, miserére nobis.
Sancta Trínitas unus Deus, miserére nobis.
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.
Sancta Dei Génitrix, ora.
Sancta Virgo vírginum ora.
Sancte Míchael, ora.
Sancte Gábriel, ora.
Sancte Ráphael, ora.
Omnes sancti Angeli et Archangeli, orate pro nobis.
Omnes sancti beatórum Spirítuum órdines, oráte pro nobis.
Sancte Joánnes Baptísta, ora.
Sancte Joseph, ora.
Omnes sancti Patriárchæ et Prophétæ, oráte pro nobis.
Sancte Petre, ora.
Sancte Paule, ora.
Sancte Andréa, ora.
Sancte Jacóbe, ora.
Sancte Joánnes, ora.
Sancte Thoma ora.
Sancte Jacóbe, ora.
Sancte Philíppe, ora.
Sancte Bartholomæe, ora.

Sancte Matthæe, ora.
Sancte Simon, ora.
Sancte Thaddæe, ora.
Sancte Mathía, ora.
Sancte Bárnaba, ora.
Sancte Luca, ora.
Sancte Marce, ora.
Omnes sancti Apóstoli, et Evangelístæ, oráte.
Omnes sancti discípuli Dómini, oráte.
Omnes sancti Innocéntes, oráte.
Sancte Stéphane, ora.
Sancte Laurénti, ora.
Sancte Vincénti, ora.
Sancti Fabiáne et Sebastiáne, oráte.
Sancti Joánnes et Paule, oráte.
Sancti Cosma et Damiáne, oráte.
Sancti Gervási et Protási, oráte.
Omnes sancti Mártyres, oráte.
Sancte Silvéster, ora.
Sancte Gregóri, ora.
Sancte Ambrósi, ora.
Sancte Augustíne, ora.
Sancte Hierónyme, ora.
Sancte Martíne, ora.
Sancte Nicoláe, ora.
Omnes sancti Pontífices et Confessóres, oráte.
Omnes sancti Doctóres, oráte.
Sancte Antóni, ora.
Sancte Benedícte, ora.
Sancte Bernárde, ora.
Sancte Domínice, ora.
Sancte Francísce, ora.

Omnes sancti Sacerdótes et Levítæ, oráte.
Omnes sancti Mónach et Eremítæ, oráte.
Sancta María Magdaléna, ora.
Sancta Agatha, ora.
Sancta Lúcia, ora.
Sancta Agnes, ora.
Sancta Cæcília, ora.
Sancta Catharína, ora.
Sancta Anastásia, ora.
Omnes sanctæ Vírgines et Víduæ, oráte.
Omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, intercédite pro nobis.
Propitius esto, parce nobis, Domine.
Propítius esto, exáudi nos, Dómine.
Ab omni malo, Líbera nos, Dómine.
Ab omni peccáto, líbera.
Ab ira tua, líbera.
A subitánea et improvísa morte, líbera.
Ab insídiis diáboli, líbera.
Ab ira, et odio, et omni mala voluntáte, líbera.
A spíritu fornicatiónis, líbera.
A fúlgure et tempestáte, líbera.
A flagéllo terræmótus, líbera.
A peste, fame et bello, líbera.
A morte perpétua, líbera.
Per mystérium sanctæ Incarnatiónis tuæ, líbera.
Per advéntum tuum, líbera.
Per nativitátem tuam, líbera.
Per baptísmum et sanctum jejúnium tuum, libera.
Per crucem et passiónem tuam, líbera.
Per mortem et sepultúram tuam, líbera.
Per sanctam resurrectiónem tuam líbera.
Per admirábilem ascensiónem tuam, líbera.

Per advéntum Spíritus sancti Paráclíti, líbera.
In die judícii, líbera.
Peccatores, te rogamus, audi nos.
Ut nobis parcas, te rogamus, audi nos.
Ut nobis indúlgeas, te rogámus.
Ut ad veram pœniténtiam nos perdúcere dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut Ecclésiam tuam sanctam régere, et conserváre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut Domnum apostólicum, et omnes ecclesiásticos órdines in sancta religióne conserváre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut inimícos sanctæ Ecclésiæ humiliáre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut régibus, et princípibus christiánis pacem, et veram concórdiam donáre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut cuncto pópulo christiáno pacem et unitátem largíri dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut nosmetípsos in tuo sancto servitio confortáre et conserváre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut mentes nostras ad cœléstia desidéria érigas, te rogámus.
Ut ómnibus benefactóribus nostris sempitérna bona retríbuas, te rogámus.
Ut ánimas nostras, fratrum, propinquórum, et benefactórum nostrórum ab ætérna damnatióne erípias, te rogámus.
Ut fructus terræ dare, et conserváre dignéris, te rogámus.
Ut ómnibus fidélibus defúnctis réquiem ætérnam donáre dignéris, te rogámus.

Hic datur benedictio, sanctificatio et consecratio per Pontificem rebus consecrandis, ut infra in locis propriis dicetur:

Ut nos exaudíre dignéris, te rogámus.
Fili Dei, te rogámus.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Domine.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccáta mundi, exáudi nos, Dómine.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccáta mundi, miserére nobis.
Christe, audi nos. Christe, exaudi nos. Kyrie, eleison. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

Postquam autem dictum fuerit in Litaniis:

Ut ómnibus Fidélibus defúnctis, etc. ℟. Te rogámus, audi nos,

Surgit Pontifex cum mitra ab accubitu, et se ad ordinandos vertens, et baculum pastoralem in sinistra manu tenens, ordinandis prostratis manentibus, dicit:

Ut hos eléctos bene ✠ dícere dignéris. ℟. Te rogámus audi nos.

Secundo dicit:

Ut hos eléctos bene ✠ dicere, et sancti ✠ ficáre dignéris. ℟. Te rogámus, audi nos.

Tertio dicit:

Ut hos eléctos bene ✠ dícere, sancti ✠ ficáre, et conse-✠ cráre dignéris. ℟. Te rogámus, audi nos.

Tum iterum super faldistorium procumbit, schola perficiente Litanias,

Ut nos exaudíre dignéris,

usque ad finem. Quibus finitis, Pontifex surgens cum mitra sedet super faldistorium ante medium altaris, et Archidiaconus dicit alta voce:

Recédant in partem, qui ordinándi sunt Diáconi, et Presbyteri.

Quibus ad aliquem locum idoneum, unde Pontificem celebrantem videre possint, transeuntibus, ad ordinationem Subdiaconorum proceditur. Illis itaque coram Pontifice, per ordinem, in modum coronæ, genuflexis, Pontifex admonet eos, dicens:

Adepturi, fílii dilectíssimi, offícium Subdiaconátus sédulo atténdite, quale ministérium vobis tráditur. Subdiáconum enim opórtet aquam ad ministérium altáris præparáre; Diácono ministráre; pallas altáris, et corporália ablúere; Cálicem, et Paténam in usum sacrifícii eídem offérre. Oblatiónes quæ véniunt in altáre, panes propositiónis vocántur: de ipsis oblatiónibus tantum debet in altáre poni, quantum pópulo possit suffícere, ne áliquid pútridum in sacrário remáneat. Pallæ, quæ sunt in substratório altáris, in álio vase debent lavári, et in álio corporáles pallæ. Ubi autem corporáles pallæ lotæ fúerint, nullum áliud linteámen debet lavári, ípsaque lotiónis aqua in baptistérium debet vergi. Studéte ítaque, ut ista visibília ministéria quæ díximus, nítide et diligentíssime compléntes, invisibília horum exémplo perficiátis. Altáre quidem sanctæ Ecclésiæ, ipse est Christus, teste Joánne, qui in Apocalypsi sua, altáre áureum se vidísse pérhibet, stans ante thronum, in quo, et per quem, oblatiónes fidélium Deo Patri consecrántur. Cujus altáris pallæ et corporália sunt membra Christi, scílicet fidéles Dei, quibus Dóminus, quasi vestiméntis pretiósis circúmdatur, ut ait Psalmísta: Dóminus regnávit, decórem indútus est. Beátus quoque Joánnes in Apocalypsi vidit Fílium hóminis præcínctum zona áurea, id est, sanctórum catérva. Si ítaque humána fragilitáte contíngat in áliquo fidéles maculári, præbénda est a vobis aqua cœléstis doctrínæ, qua purificáti, ad ornaméntum altáris, et cultum divíni sacrifícii rédeant. Estóte ergo tales, qui sacrifíciis

divínis, et Ecclésiæ Dei, hoc est, córpori Christi digne servíre valeátis, in vera et cathólica fide fundáti; quóniam, ut ait Apóstolus: Omne quod non est ex fide, peccátum est, schismáticum est, et extra unitátem Ecclésiæ est. Et ídeo, si usque nunc fuístis tardi ad Ecclésiam, ámodo debétis esse assídui. Si usque nunc somnolénti, ámodo vígiles. Si usque nunc ebriósi, ámodo sóbrii. Si usque nunc inhonésti, ámodo casti. Quod ipse vobis præstáre dignétur, qui vivit, et regnat Deus in sæcula sæculorum. ℟. Amen.

Deinde Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus Calicem vacuum, cum Patena vacua superposita, quem successive manu dextera singuli tangunt,* Pontifice dicente:

Videte cujus ministérium vobis tráditur; ídeo vos admóneo, ut ita vos exhibeátis, ut Deo plácére possítis.

Et Archidiaconus accipit, et tradit eis urceolos cum vino, et aqua, ac bacile cum manutergio, quæ omnia similiter, tangere debent.

Postea surgit Pontifex, et versus ad populum, stans cum mitra, dicit:

Oremus Deum, ac Dóminum nostrum, fratres charíssimi, ut super hos servos suos, quos ad Subdiaconátus offícium vocáre dignátus est, infúndat bene ✠ dictiónem suam, et grátiam; ut in conspéctu ejus fidéliter serviéntes, prædestináta sanctis præmia consequántur: Adjuvánte Dómino nostro Jesu Christo, qui cum eo vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum deposita mitra, conversus ad altare Pontifex dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

*Apponunt pollicem dextrum cuppæ calicis, indicem autemet medium quoque pariter dextrum, super patenam.

Et mox Pontifex versus ad Ordinandos genuflexos, dicit sine mitra:

Domine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, bene ✠ dícere dignáre hos Fámulos tuos, quos ad Subdiaconátus offícium elígere dígnátus es; ut eos in sacrário tuo sancto strénuos, sollicitósque cœléstis milítiæ instítuas excubitóres, sanctísque altáribus tuis fidéliter subminístrent; et requiéscat super eos Spíritus sapiéntiæ, et intelléctus; Spíritus consílii, et fortitúdinis; Spíritus sciéntiæ, et pietátis; et répleas eos Spíritu timóris tui; et eos in ministério divíno confírmes, ut obediéntes facto, ac dicto paréntes, tuam grátiam consequántur. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tum Pontifex sedens, accepta mitra, amictum qui in collo ordinandorum jacet, imponit super caput singulis, dicens:

Accipe amíctum, per quem designátur castigátio vocis. In nómine Pa ✠ tris, et Fí ✠ lii, et Spíritus ✠ sancti. ℟. Amen.

Tum immittit manipulum in sinistrum brachium cuilibet, dicens:

Accipe manípulum, per quem designántur fructus bonórum óperum. In nómine Pa ✠ tris, et Fí ✠ lii, et Spíritus ✠ sancti. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc induit quemlibet tunica, et si tantum unica sit, immittit illam cuilibet solum usque ad scapulas, ac retrahens postremum totaliter induit, dicens cuilibet:

Tunica jucunditátis, et induménto lætítiæ índuat te Dóminus. In nómine Pa ✠ tris, et Fí ✠ lii, et Spíritus ✠ sancti. ℟. Amen.

Postea accipit, et tradit omnibus librum Epistolarum, manu dextera ipsum simul tangentibus, dicens:

Accipite librum Epistolárum, et habéte potestátem legéndi eas in Ecclésia sancta Dei, tam pro vivis, quam pro defúnctis. In nómine Pa ✠ tris, et Fí ✠ lii, et Spíritus ✠ sancti. ℟. Amen.

Omnibus expeditis, suggerente Archidiacono, Ordinati redeunt ad loca sua; unus tamen de noviter ordinatis, tunica indutus dicet Epistolam suo tempore.*

*Si Missa legatur, subdiaconus leget Epistolam, dum Episcopus legit.

SUBDEACONSHIP

Propter te mortificamur tota die.
Æstimati sumus tanquam oves occisionis.
For thy sake we are done to death all the day long,
We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.—Ps. 43, 22.

After having quoted a text referring to immolation, I would like to remind you of a word of St. John: "*Beati qui ad cœnam nuptiarum Agni vocati sunt.*" Blessed are those Acolytes, children of light, ministers at the holy sacrifice, who come now to seal forever the engagements of their tonsure, and to complete the divine alliance, which they had accepted when they uttered their first consecration: *Dominus pars . . . . Beati qui ad cœnam nuptiarum Agni vocati sunt!*

Can we associate the two ideas of sacred nuptials and of immolation? Those two ideas are certainly not contradictory. They explain each other and blend into the most perfect unity. It is on Calvary that Jesus consummates his wedding with the Church. It is also by this immolation that the subdeacon consummates his union with Jesus.

On the day of His Incarnation Our Lord entered upon His betrothal with our human nature, and the royal gift which He received on that day was the power of suffering and dying. During all his life he was longing for the hour of His death: *Hora mea*, He called it; *hora mea nondum venit. Sed baptismo habeo baptizari, et quomodo coarctor usquedum perficiatur!* He was longing for an eternal alliance with His Church. Now His hour has come. He is nailed to the Cross; the Church is close by Him,

represented by Mary and John and Magdalene. Innocence, priesthood and repentance, is not that the whole Church? The dying Christ looks down on them and from His lips, parched with fever, a cry goes forth: *Sitio.* He addresses His spouse: I thirst, I long for your love; I want it entirely and forever. I am longing for an eternal union with you; I want you for my Spouse, do you accept? And the Infant Church, with trembling lips silently answers: Yes, I do accept; and the Heart of Jesus hears that voice, and from this Heart a last word falls: *Consummatum est.*

The nuptials of the Subdeacon have to be consummated also in blood and death. Very often seminarians take an incomplete view of Subdeaconship. By many it is exclusively restricted to the vow of chastity. This is certainly incomplete. Chastity is a consequence of the engagement; other sacrifices are demanded from the Subdeacon. The Subdeacon is above all a victim: For thy sake . . . . we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. *Propter Te mortificamur tota die!*

Now this victim is introduced in the sanctuary, well adorned for the immolation. Dressed in a long white garment, *alba innocentiæ*, a sacred veil upon the shoulders, the amice, and a cincture symbol of perfect chastity. *Accedant qui ordinandi sunt subdiaconi.* The victim ascends Calvary.

When in presence of the Bishop, the Subdeacons do not kneel. They remain standing. This is to express the plenitude of freedom which is theirs, when such heavy duties are imposed upon them. They must be at least twenty-one years old . . . . To them the world naturally has its attractions, life holds out to them bright

hopes and charming prospects. They are called upon to renounce all these for ever. If they were younger, perhaps they could not realize the advantages which the world has in store for them; more advanced in years they could not feel so keenly the extent of this sacrifice. Now they see clearly what they could expect, they feel how deeply they might enjoy this prospective happiness. They are free and they stand . . . . ready to go where God wants them, silently waiting for the moment of their solemn engagement.

Holy Mother Church is, as it were, frightened, seeing them about to take this step. Are they not prompted by a feeling of enthusiasm, artificially provoked by examples of fervent lives? Or perhaps by a secret desire of pleasing a pious parent, or an influential friend? Might it not be that for taking that step to-day they shall repent to-morrow? The Church does not wish to take them by surprise. Therefore the Bishop warns them in an incomparable admonition, one of the most dramatic and touching pages ever found in any literature.

Never has the Bishop been so fatherly. So many secrets are stored up in his soul, owing to his long experience in administration and government: he has seen so many priests using their subdeaconship in such different ways. Perhaps painful remembrances pass before his mind, even whilst he recalls the enrapturing happiness of his own Subdeaconship. *Filii dilectissimi.* Indeed they are dear to his heart at this moment; they are to be promoted to the Sacred order of subdeaconship. *Iterum atque iterum considerare debetis attente quod onus hodie ultro appetitis.* It is a burden which you ask for: *considerare debetis attente:* this is your most sacred duty.

Of course these words do not imply that it is just on the very instant which precedes the ordination that this serious reflection and careful consideration has to be made. It is rather now, during the retreat, or in your habitual dealings with your director that such a serious study should be made.

Hactenus liberi estis. The Bishop insists on this point. They are men, they have the complete exercise of their free will. *Hactenus liberi estis.* Remember the Pontifical uses the language of the Romans, and you know in ancient Rome what was the force of this expression: *liberi estis.* Although you have offered yourself when you became a cleric, although you have received the consecration of the minor orders, still you may abandon this vocation, you may forego the priesthood and return to the world. This is perfectly lawful: *Licet vobis pro arbitrio ad sæcularia vota transire.*

Vota sæcularia: what vision have those words suggested to your imagination! The joys of a home of your own; they are so sweet and sacred! "It is not good for man to be alone:" Who said these words? is it not He who has made the heart of man? It is so good, in the journey of life, to lean on a faithful companion, to share our heart's sorrows with a heart which knows how to sympathise, to console and to love. Is not that the normal life of man? *Masculum et feminam creavit eos!*

Have you never heard from within voices conjuring up the joys of a pure love, joys of an intimate, vivid and mutual affection, the inexpressible joy of seeing your own existence continued and multiplied, as it were, in those beloved children whose noisy games and endless prattle would be the charm of a happy home; joy indeed would it be to

devote one's life to the training of loyal citizens for the country, and faithful soldiers for the Church? *Filii tui sicut novellæ olivarum in circuitu mensæ tuæ! Licet.* Is it not also a lawful aspiration to think of accomplishing something great in life? Lawful also the vision of a life without luxury, yet comfortable, with liberal expenses and intellectual enjoyments? *Ad vota sæcularia transire licet: hactenus liberi estis.*

Perhaps also you have heard the siren voice of passion! Forbidden enjoyments, unlawful affection have power enough to enslave perhaps the greater number of mankind! What power therefore to make a man happy must there be in the lawful affections! Why! Is it not against nature to renounce them forever? Yes, says the world; it is against nature, man is not made for such a life. Poor victim of an illusion! The Church condemns you to sacrilege and infidelity by her cruel unreasonable laws, because she cannot prevent an expansion of life demanded by nature!

Once more gentlemen, you are free: *hactenus liberi estis.* If these dreams are fascinating your heart, you may change them into realities: *licet vobis pro arbitrio ad sæcularia vota transire.*

See whether you wish to make an heroic sacrifice: *Quod si hunc ordinem susceperitis, non amplius licebit a proposito vestro resilire.* Once made, it cannot be revoked. This engagement is essentially free, but it will do away with the liberty of another choice. You will be Subdeacons forever. After your ordination the visions of worldly happiness will up again before your imagination; but then to retrace a single step will be impossible. Once you become Subdeacons you are bound: *Ego vinctus Christi Jesu.* To regret these joys would be a crime; to desire them would be

a sin. You cannot go back: *non amplius licebit a proposito vestro resilire . . . . sed Deo cui servire regnare est perpetuo famulari.* Here the Bishop expresses the very essence of the Subdeaconship: to be engaged forever in the service of God and His Church. A glorious service, *cui servire regnare est.*

In Ecclesia Dei semper esse mancipatos. Here again the Pontifical uses Roman language and Roman figures. *Mancipatos* means the absolute right of ownership just as on an object sold forever; this is the strongest possible word to express the sacrifice which the Subdeacon has made. Forever; he has pledged his liberty, his life, his body, his soul, his heart. This is a glorious immolation, yet a real one. The Subdeacon has planted the cross in his own life. *Perpetuo famulari:* this means a life of sacrifice, of privations, of devotedness, of abnegation, of renouncement, humility, poverty, solitude, prayer and expiation. *Tribulationes me manent,* said St. Paul. This is true of every priest engaged in the service of the Church: *propter Te mortificamur tota die.*

To be acceptable to God, a victim must be innocent and pure. In the Old Testament the victims destined for the immolation had to be spotless: *æstimati sumus tanquam oves occisionis:* therefore an obligation of chastity is imposed upon the subdeacon. *Castitatem, illo adjuvante, servare oportebit.* It would take the lips of an Angel to speak worthily of this virtue.

There are three degrees, three successive ascensions in that virtue of chastity. The first is the fulfilment of a natural and divine law—a law, however, which has never been well observed prior to Christianity. This law forbids anything which would be a profanation of the temple

of the Holy Ghost, which is our body. Rigorous precept imposed by reason itself, which cannot give up in favour of our senses the superior direction that it has to exercise over them. It is called Chastity (*Castitas, castigare*) because it costs pain to observe it.

A higher degree is virginity or celibacy. All are not obliged to practice it; it is a mere counsel of perfection. Those who wish to observe it have to renounce the lawful yet dangerous charms of earthly love. Whilst those joys of love and family life are allowed to all, they are denied to the Subdeacon. His state is one of virginity.

Above virginity is purity which is an incessant effort to ascend higher in light and love, a perpetual *excelsior*, a continual endeavor to become more and more detached from every earthly thing, to love and enjoy only the heavenly.

Chaste as a Christian, virginal as a Religious, pure as an Angel—this is what the Subdeacon ought to be; Mary alone is more pure.

Castitatem servare oportebit. It is a strict obligation: *oportebit.*

The fundamental reason is found in the intimacy of the relations which the priest is to have with Our Lord,

> Qui de Virgine natus,
> Per nos saepe renasceris.

The Church is very strict on this point. When an inconstant Subdeacon asks for a dispensation from his vows the answer is generally: *Sit castus aut pereat.* From every other obligation, Rome grants dispensations rather willingly, when there are good reasons; in this case the answer is: *Sit castus aut pereat.*

The reason is plain: it is a question of her honour* and success. The priest is the man of sacrifice: could he with good grace ascend the altar if he does not deprive himself of earthly joys? St. Chrysostom says that the hand which immolates the divine Lamb should be more pure than the rays of the sun. *Non horruisti virginis uterum!* says the Church. She thanks God that He did not shrink from the womb of the Immaculate Virgin. *Qui de Virgine natus, per nos sæpe renasceris.* We see plainly, then, why the Church imposes such a strict obligation upon her priest: *Castitatem servare oportebit.*

But chastity is also necessary because the priest is a confessor as well as the minister of sacrifice. This young man four and twenty years of age, to whom God has entrusted the power of forgiving sins, enters the confessional. To him sinners come and sometimes, the younger he is, the more dreadful are the confessions which he has to hear. The depths of corruption, the horrors of debauchery, the most disgusting wounds, the most abominable thoughts and desires, every secret is laid open to him. Would he inspire just the same confidence if he had not a virginal soul?

Chastity is necessary; but what a difficult task for the priest to preserve and defend this delicate virtue! The day after his ordination he is just the same man as before, subject to the same temptations. And danger surrounds

*Chastity is the most distinctive and the most indispensable ornament of a priest. He might possess the faith of Abraham, the wisdom of Solomon, the piety of David, the zeal of Elias, the patience of Job, the apostolic heroism of John the Baptist, the eloquence of Paul, and yet his spiritual armor would be incomplete, if it were not crowned with the helmet of sacerdotal chastity.—Cardinal Gibbons, *The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 130.

him from all sides. He is obliged to devote himself to souls and in this very ministry he has to face the most terrible dangers. If this young man has committed grievous sins during his past life, what impression will the accusations of his penitents make upon him, whom only the remembrance of his own sins might move, shake or even cause to fall? And if he has preserved his innocence, is not the danger still greater? This first acquaintance with the evil, this first awakening of the passions may prove so terrible!

However the greatest danger is not to be met in the confession of great sinners; it is more likely to come from those simple, candid and confiding souls which come to us so innocently, especially if they are afflicted and if we have to console them. Shame unto the priest whose confessional would be a stumbling-block for a single soul!

Still the dangers from outside could be victoriously faced if all our natural defenders would be on their guard; but if there are traitors inside, the citadel is lost! Our senses will shrink from mortification. However to intend to remain virginal and refuse mortification is just as impossible as to set the house on fire and to wish not to burn it. "We have a manifold nature; an intelligence, a will, an imagination, affections, instincts, etc. . . . . All these we must mortify. We must mortify our imagination, for it is the picture gallery in which a man's passions find their fuel. What a life work is the purification of the imagination! It implies restraint on idle thoughts, stern discipline as to what are called bad thoughts, much self-denial in regard to reading. Indiscriminate reading is often the beginning of a fall:"* *castitatem servare oportebit.*

* Bishop Hedley, *Lex Levitarum*, p. 33.

The greatest danger comes from our heart. This poor human heart wants to give love, to receive love, to enjoy love. But it is precisely our love which causes the chastity or the going astray of our hearts. In the Subdeacon especially, one love must dominate over every other love: the love of Jesus. Indeed it is a great grace of God to our consecrated soul if we have a friend, a brother priest who helps us to carry the burden of the ministry, but save such a friendship, there is no other affection which might not become a great danger. *Erunt sicut Angeli in cœlis.* We must love souls as Angels do. Souls should have towards us only the sentiments which they have towards their angel guardians. Ah! if some day, this poor heart, longing for love, deprived of all consolation, disappointed in all its highest expectations of success, happens to be shaken by disturbing pictures of earthly happiness and affections; it is then that we should grasp our Crucifix in our hands, and remember what we were told in the seminary, viz., that the Subdeaconship, is a real, complete immolation; then, kneeling down and kissing lovingly our Crucified Lord, we should renew our vow of Subdeacon: *propter Te mortificamur tota die. . . . . Castitatem servare oportebit.*

But there is a word which is calculated to make us feel more confident: *Castitatem, Deo adjuvante, servare oportebit.* Without the grace of God, we can do nothing, but with that grace, with prayer, nothing is impossible to us, and we may say with St. Paul: *Scio Cui credidi, et certus sum quia potens est depositum meum servare.*

Another obligation is imposed upon the Subdeacon, and this, although difficult, is also full of consolation and true joy. The Church that has imposed upon him a life of

sacrifice crowned by the vow of chastity makes the Subdeacon the man of prayer. This is another sacrifice, the sacrifice of praise, for which it is necessary that his lips should have been purified. We recite the Breviary in the name of the Church and in union with Our Lord. The Breviary is the most wonderful synthesis. From everywhere confused voices rise towards Heaven; all these aspirations, we concentrate, and transform, by uniting them with the prayer of our Lord. We are the ambassadors of all nations to God, and we pray for all creatures. This Breviary will be a consolation, a rest, a delicious refreshment to your soul. But of course, such an important office must be well discharged. For that you need to be men of prayer. It is a more painful crucifixion perhaps to be always recollected, than to be faithful to your vow of chastity. Thus the divine office is another and important part of the immolation: *Propter Te mortificamur tota die.*

You have now some idea of the burden of a Subdeacon, concludes the Bishop: *onus hodie ultro appetitis. Proinde, dum tempus est, cogitate.* Once more he repeats the same idea. You are still at liberty to withdraw; a few moments more and it will be too late: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.* Reflect that it will be very hard to carry this cross all your life long. Now, indeed, you do not feel any difficulty, you are enraptured with love and joy; but a day will come, very soon, perhaps, and you will feel desolate and forlorn. The bare cross will weigh heavily on your shoulders. Perhaps you would then hesitate to make an eternal engagement; but then it would be too late: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.*

Are you really strong enough for such a cross? *Crux*

virginum castitas. Others there have been who thought they were sufficiently protected, brave enough for the battle, and . . . . they fell beneath the burden—a greater number, perhaps than you imagine! and perhaps they were better than you are, when seminarians: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.*

Subdeacons there have been who cursed the day of their ordination. To them it was a chain they longed to break: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.*

Sometimes it has happened that not many days after their ordination, Subdeacons have fallen, whose preparation was not inferior to yours: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.*

On the morning of your Subdiaconate, your friends will rejoice, they will congratulate you, and yet it might be that this very day of your Subdeaconship will be inscribed in the book of doom as a day of death and damnation: *Dum tempus est, cogitate.*

Consult and pray . . . .

Et si in sancto proposito perseverare placet, in nomine Domini, huc accedite. And the Acolytes, firm and strong, well knowing in Whom they place their trust, step towards the Altar. Sublime step which is a great act of faith and love! Of course they are not yet Subdeacons and they might still go back. But this step even if it has no efficacy of its own is the vivid expression of the determination of their minds.

After such a decision, an immense need of prayer is felt by the Bishop. He calls the candidates to the Deaconship and the Priesthood who have already taken some months ago this life-decision, and all together they fall on the pavement, humbling themselves and praying as they will perhaps never pray in their whole life.

Kyrie eleison. Indeed they need to proclaim their misery and ask the mercy of God upon their soul. *Christe, exaudi nos.* How could the crucified Christ help but hear the prayer of those victims? For what do they ask? To answer such a question, it would be necessary to read their hearts. Do they know it themselves, and even if they knew, how could they say what is unspeakable? But what can be said, what can throw light upon this solemn instant is what the heart of a pious mother, a devoted director feels at this moment. *Christe, exaudi nos:* What they ask is this: If this, my son, whom I love so dearly, is ever to prove unfaithful to his promises, let him not rise from the floor of the sanctuary; rather take him to Thyself, this very hour. *Christe, exaudi nos!*

Then the Bishop begins that sublime poem, the triumphal march of the Redeemer, followed by his conquest, the grand army of all Saints, Martyrs and Confessors, Pontiffs and Virgins. All the glories of the supernatural world are there; all those who died to themselves to follow the Crucified Saviour. All of them have suffered, all have feared, all have wept; therefore they will pray for the Subdeacons: *omnes Sancti, intercedite pro nobis.* And, at each invocation, those victims make a new act of love, and when comes the name of a Saint more especially cherished, or one whose virtues fit him more specially as a model for the Subdeacon, the supplication becomes more instant, tears flow in greater abundance, and those happy victims repeat, in their enthusiasm and in their love: *Mihi adhærere Deo bonum est!*

A more solemn moment has come: the Bishop rises and in the deep silence, he invokes in solemn chant the mercy

of God upon the ordinands: *Ut hos electos benedicere et sanctificare et consecrare digneris. Electos!* The *élite*, the choice souls of his diocese are there prostrate. *Hos electos:* those young men have been selected by God. *Benedicere:* The blessing of God will consist in giving to those young men all the aptitudes necessary to answer properly the divine election. *Sanctificare:* So often what God has done for them has been destroyed by their frailty; God will repair: *sanctificare. Consecrare:* on those victims destined exclusively for God, a divine mark, a sacred character should be impressed: *ut hos electos consecrare digneris.*

Then we address the Lamb of God, the divine Victim immolated for the sins of the world, and once more the invocation: *Christe, audi nos.* Jesus knows what we ask. It is the same request which He addressed to His Father for the Apostles: *Non rogo ut tollas eos de mundo, sed ut serves eos a malo . . . . Manete in dilectione mea.*

The first part of the ordination is over. Everybody in the church would like to read on the faces, in the eyes, deep down in the heart of these chosen ones what are their sentiments.

Even now they are not yet Subdeacons, they might go back. But why should they? If they have accepted the dreadful obligations, the honours and functions which they have to receive will not frighten them. They were standing when the Bishop proposed to them those obligations, ready to advance or to retire; they must kneel down to hear of the honours which are to be conferred upon them.

In a long address, the Bishop enumerates three offices which they have to fulfil: Before the sacrifice: *Aquam ad*

ministerium Altaris præparare; during the sacrifice, *diacono ministrare;* after the sacrifice: *pallas et corporalia abluere.*

1. What is the relation of those functions with the ministry of Our Lord? *Non venit Filius hominis ministrari, sed ministrare.* Our Lord came not to be a Master but a servant. Deacon (*διακὸνος*) means servant. The Subdeacon will be the servant of the Deacon: *servus servorum. Quanto major es, humilia te in omnibus,* says the Following of Christ. Now, Subdeaconship is a major order, therefore more humility is required from the Subdeacon. Of course there is nothing more opposed to the spirit of the world. In the world, they do not want to serve, but to have servants. But the Subdeacon has to follow as a rule of life, just the opposite of what the world does. How absurd then would it be that after his ordination, a Subdeacon should be not as willing to obey as before, and even take advantage of his irrevocable engagements to create difficulties for his superiors, and of his promotion to sacred orders to disedify his younger brethren!

2. The second function: to pour the water in the chalice recalls to our minds the Sacred Heart of Jesus pierced on the Cross: *Exiit aqua et sanguis,* says St. John. As this water poured in the Chalice will be changed into the Blood of Our Lord as well as the wine, the fervent Subdeacon desires in his humility to be as that little drop of water, changed into and united with the great Victim of our salvation: *Vinum germinans virgines.*

3. The last function is a ministry of purification. The Pontifical directs this to be done in a very careful and supernatural manner. It goes into details, and points out, likewise, all the symbols thereof: *Altare quidem ipse*

Christus est; Pallæ et corporalia sunt membra Christi, scilicet fideles Dei. Indeed Our Lord has been the Subdeacon par excellence who purified the faithful in His Blood: *Lavit nos a peccatis nostris in Sanguine suo.*

Then the Bishop sums up the qualities of a good Subdeacon: *Estote tales qui sacrificiis divinis digne servire valeatis.* It is so evident that the Subdeacon must be a man of sacrifice! But for this a condition is necessary: *in vera fide fundatos.* A vivid faith is the foundation of this magnificent edifice of supernatural virtues. Without a vivid faith it is impossible to remain pure, to pray well, to practice self-denial: *quem cum amavero casta sum,* said St. Agnes.* I am pure because I love. "Understand that the serious and pious study of the beauty of God, whether in His works, or in Himself, or in His Word made Flesh, Jesus is . . . . one of the most ardent furnaces of love; it is consequently a powerful and infallible principle of chastity."†

But our love is always in proportion with our faith. The best method to acquire those virtues is simply, says the Pontifical, to practice the virtues of the minor orders; this is the best preparation for Subdeaconship, because it is the one imposed by the Church.

*"What do you want with me? I have already One to Whom I am pledged, Who loves me and Whom I love. My Betrothed Who has my confidence, is He Whom the Angels serve, and Whose beauty the stars of Heaven admire. I love Christ born of a Virgin Mother, and of a Virgin God; when I love Him, I remain chaste; when I touch Him, I am pure; and when I espouse Him, I am still more a Virgin than before."—*Breviarium Romanum,* Officium Stæ Agnetis.

†Bishop Ch. Gay, *Christian life and virtues,* on Chastity. This admirable chapter is one of the most useful reading for a subdeacon. It is hard to refrain from quoting more of it.

Si usque nunc fuistis tardi ad Ecclesiam, amodo debetis esse assidui; Ostiary, if you have a strong faith in the real presence of Our Lord, why would you be slow to visit the Blessed Sacrament? *Amodo assidui.*

Si usque nunc somnolenti; Lector, if you are slothful, instead of working hard for Jesus, is it not because you have not faith enough in the ministry of Gospel? *Amodo vigiles.*

Si usque nunc ebriosi; Exorcist, if you had more faith in your power against the devil and more confidence in Our Lord, would you indulge in self-gratification? *Amodo sobrii.*

Si usque nunc inhonesti; Acolyte could you ever yield to sensuality, if you consider what you are and what you do at the Altar of God? *Amodo casti! Quod vobis concedat Deus per gratiam suam.*

Even now the Bishop could say: *hactenus liberi estis.* These Acolytes are not yet bound by Subdeaconship; but the next moment brings with it an eternal effect.

An empty chalice is brought to the Bishop. It is empty; it is not yet the glorious chalice of your first Mass in which you will be allowed to consecrate the blood of Our Lord. The Subdeacon has to shed his own blood drop by drop. This chalice, we might say, is rather like the chalice of Gethsemani. Are you prepared to accept it? *Potestis bibere calicem?*

The fervent Acolyte accepts and he stretches out his hand over the chalice to swear to Jesus an eternal fidelity . . . . *Consummatum est* . . . . He is Subdeacon . . . . . it is now too late to draw back: *retro abire non licet.* But there is no question of going back! . . . You belong to Jesus for ever: *Consummatum est.*

After a little while, when the priests shall have been ordained, when their lips shall have consecrated the bread of Angels, you will receive your first communion as Subdeacons. Jesus will come to take possession of His spouse. Silence is the only way to express your feelings at this moment: *Dilectus meus mihi et ego illi, qui pascitur inter lilia.* . . . . Then you will repeat from the depths of your heart: *Consummatum est;* I belong to Jesus forever.

More truly still—all remains to be done: *Videte cujus ministerium vobis tradiur. Cujus?* You become the ministers of a crucified Lord. *Ideo vos admoneo ut ita vos exhibeatis ut Deo placere possitis.* To please God; just the same recommendation as on the day of your tonsure, because it is the same union with God. You have renounced earthly nuptials for this very reason: TO PLEASE GOD. *Ita vos exhibeatis ut Deo* PLACERE *possitis.*

To please God! this is not possible except by following the way of the Cross. You should now love fervently the stations of the Cross, the Mass of the Subdeacon, as it were, the living memorial of your ordination. At the second station, when Our Lord receives His Cross, renew your vow of chastity—for it is good, it is better to pronounce this vow at the moment you become a Subdeacon, although it is not certain that the Church obliges you to pronounce it yourself.*

*"Dissensus est inter theologos, utrum obligatio cœlibatus ex sola lege ecclesiastica an simul ex voto oriatur . . . . Quod autem aliqui, ... voti obligationem excludere volunt quia sacri ordinis candidati non jam interrogentur, neque promittant cœlibatum; id nititur in neglecta distinctione inter promissionem expressam et tacitam . . . . Si accedit ad ordinem eo ipso se in honorem Dei castitatem servaturum tacite promittit coram Ecclesia."—LEHMKUHL, S.J., *Theologia moralis*, 1910, II, 781.

All along these stations, *videte cujus ministerium vobis traditur: Jesum et hunc crucifixum.* He is your spouse; you belong to Him forever: *Ideo vos admoneo ut ita vos exhibeatis ut Deo placere possitis.* Is it not for His love that you gave yourself to Him: *Propter Te mortificamur tota die!*

The ordination is completed by the bestowing of the vestments the symbolism of which expresses the sentiments of your hearts. The amice first—a symbol of the discretion, silence, recollection necessary to pray well. It is the veil of the spouse entirely consecrated to Her divine Lord. Then the maniple: symbol of hard work, earnest endeavor, generous sacrifice. Above all the bright tunic, vestment of joy. The Church wishes everybody to see that joy is the most prominent feature of that immolation: *Indumento lætitiæ induat te Dominus*, and your heart will testify silently that this vestment is not a false symbol, but the real expression of the joy with which your soul is overflowing.

A last gift from Our Lord to His spouse: the book of Epistles, the collection of the letters written for our consolation in this exile: what a precious and beautiful wedding present!

How touching is the last word: *Accipite potestatem legendi eas, tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis!* The living will be present at the festival. You must associate with it those who are gone before us, and who would have been so happy to witness your spiritual wedding. How delicate is Holy Mother Church: *Tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis!*

Is the feast perfect? Are all the invitations complete? Not yet, it seems. We have not seen our Blessed Mother. However, when it is a question of sacrifice and immolation

she must be present. Invite Mary to assist at your wedding; she will come, she will bring with her the choicest spiritual blessings, and will render you ever faithful to your virginal troth. "*Et die tertia nuptiæ factæ sunt in Cana Galileæ et erat Mater Jesu ibi:* and the third day there was a marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee and the mother of Jesus was there!"—Amen.

DE ORDINATIONE DIACONI.

SUBDIACONIS ordinatis, Pontifex, reassumpta mitra, accedit ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium, ad cornu Epistolæ, ubi sedens cum mitra, oblato sibi libro et candela, legit hymnum, *Benedictus es*, vel *Alleluia*, cum versu *Benedictus es*, si sit infra Octavam Pentecostes. Interim cantatur a choro dictus *hymnus*, vel *Alleluia*, cum suo versu ut supra. Quo finito, surgit Pontifex deposita mitra, et versus ad altare, dicit in competenti tono *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, si sit infra Octavam Pentecostes, quod dum a choro perficitur, sedet cum mitra. Quo finito, deposita mitra, surgit, et versus ad populum, dicit: *Pax vobis*, vel *Dominus vobiscum*, si *Gloria in excelsis* non sit dicendum; et conversus ad altare cantat orationem Missæ diei, cum Oratione pro Ordinatis, et Ordinandis, sub uno *Per Dominum nostrum*, videlicet:

Oratio.

Exaudi, quæsumus Dómine, súpplicum preces, et devóto tibi pectóre famulántes, perpétua defensióne custódi; ut nullis perturbatiónibus impedíti, líberam servitútem tuis semper exhibeámus offíciis. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, etc.

Finita oratione, sedet Pontifex, reassumpta mitra et oblato sibi libro et candela, legit Epistolam. Interim per unum ex Subdiaconis noviter ordinatis cantatur Epistola. Qua finita surgit Pontifex, et accedit ad faldistorium ante altare cum mitra, et ibi sedet. Promovendi vero ad ordinem Diaconatus per Archidiaconum vocantur, dicendo:

Accédant, qui ordinándi sunt ad Diaconátum.

Et mox singulatim nominantur per Notarium, nulla tamen facta mentione de titulo. Eis igitur amictu, alba, cingulo, et manipulo paratis, ac stolam in sinistra manu, et candelam in dextera, ac dalmaticam super brachium sinistrum tenentibus, et in modum coronæ coram Pontifice genuflexis, Archidiaconus offerens illos Pontifici, dicit:

Reverendissime Pater, póstulat sancta Mater Ecclésia Cathólica, ut hos præséntes Subdiáconos ad onus Diacónii ordinétis.

Pontifex interrogat, dicens:

Scis illos dignos esse?

Respondet Archidiaconus:

Quantum humána fragílitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testíficor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus offícii.

Et Pontifex dicit: Deo grátias.

Et ad eorum ordinationem procedit. In primis Pontifex cum mitra sedens, clero, et populo annuntiat, dicens:

Auxiliante Dómino Deo, et Salvatóre nostro Jesu Christo, elígimus hos præséntes Subdiáconos in órdinem Diacónii. Si quis habet áliquid contra illos, pro Deo, et propter Deum cum fidúcia éxeat, et dicat; verúmtamen memor sit conditiónis suæ.

Et facta aliquali mora, Pontifex convertens sermonem suum ad Ordinandos, admonet eos, dicens:

Provehendi, fílii dilectíssimi, ad levíticum órdinem, cogitáte magnópere, ad quantum gradum Ecclésiæ ascénditis. Diáconum enim opórtet ministráre ad altáre, baptizáre, et prædicáre. Sane in véteri lege, ex duódecim, una Tribus Levi elécta est, quæ speciáli devotióne tabernáculo Dei, ejúsque sacrifíciis, ritu perpétuo deser-

víret. Tantáque dignitas ipsi concéssa est, quod nullus, nisi ex ejus stirpe, ad divínum illum cultum, atque offícium ministratúrus assúrgeret; ádeo, ut grandi quodam privilégio hæreditátis et tribus Dómini esse mererétur, et dici: quorum hódie, fílii dilectíssimi, et nomen, et offícium tenétis, quia in ministérium tabernáculi testimónii, id est, Ecclésiæ Dei, eligímini in Levítico offício, quæ semper in procínctu pósita, incessábili pugna contra inimícos dímicat: unde ait Apóstolus: Non est nobis colluctátio advérsus carnem, et sánguinem, sed advérsus príncipes, et potestátes, advérsus mundi rectóres tenebrárum harum, contra spirituália nequítiæ, in cœléstibus. Quam Ecclésiam Dei, véluti tabernáculum, portáre, et munire debétis ornátu sancto, prædicátu divíno, exémplo perfécto. Levi quippe interpretátur ádditus, sive assúmptus. Et vos, fílii dilectíssimi, qui ab hæreditáte paterna nomen accíptis, estóte assúmpti a carnálibus desidériis, a terrénis concupiscéntiis, quæ mílitant advérsus ánimam; estóte nítidi, mundi, puri, casti, sicut decet minístros Christi, et dispensatóres mysteriórum Dei; ut digne addámini ad número rum ecclesiástici gradus: ut hæréditas, et tribus amábilis Dómini esse mereámini. Et quia comminístri, et cooperatóres estis córporis, et sánguinis Domini, estóte ab omni illécebra carnis aliéni, sicut ait Scriptúra: Mundámini, qui fertis vasa Dómini. Cogitáte beátum Stéphanum, mérito præcípue castitátis ab Apóstolis ad offícium istud eléctum. Curáte, ut quibus Evangélium ore annuntiátis, vivis opéribus exponátis, ut de vobis dicátur: Beáti pedes evangelizántium pacem, evangelizántium bona. Habéte pedes vestros calceátos Sanctórum exémplis, in præparatióne Evangélii pacis. Quod vobis Dóminus concédat per grátiam suam. ℟. Amen.

Deinde, si non sint ordinati Subdiaconi, ordinandi omnes prosternunt se, ubi genuflectebant, et Pontifice ante faldistorium suum genuflectente, dicuntur Litaniæ; et ordinandi per Pontificem benedicuntur, prout supra in ordinatione Subdiaconi dictum est. Post hæc Ordinandis ab accubitu surgentibus, genuflexis tamen manentibus, Pontifex sedens in faldistorio cum mitra, intelligibili voce alloquitur clerum, et populum, dicens:

Commune votum commúnis orátio prosequátur; ut hi totíus Ecclésiæ prece, qui ad Diaconátus ministérium præparántur, Levíticæ bene ✠ dictiónis órdine claréscant, et spirituáli conversatióne præfulgéntes, grátia sanctificatiónis elúceant: Præstánte Dómino nostro Jesu Christo, qui cum Patre, et Spíritu sancto vivit, et regnat Deus in sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Deinde surgens cum mitra Pontifex, stans versus ad Ordinandos dicit, alta voce legendo:

Oremus, fratres charíssimi, Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, ut super hos fámulos suos, quos ad offícium Diaconátus dignátur assúmere, benedictiónis suæ grátiam cleménter effúndat, eísque consecratiónis indúltæ propítius dona consérvet, et preces nostras cleménter exáudiat; ut, quæ nostro gerénda sunt ministério, suo benígnus prosequátur auxílio: et quos sacris mystériis exequéndis pro nostra intelligéntia crédimus offeréndos, sua bene ✠ dictióne sanctíficet, et confírmet. Per unigénitum Fílium suum Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, qui cum eo, et Spíritu sancto vivit, et regnat Deus.

Deinde, deposita mitra, extensis manibus ante pectus, dicit:

Per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen. &. Dóminus vobíscum. ℟. Et cum spíritu tuo. Sursum corda. ℟. Habémus ad Dóminum. Grátias agámus Dómino Deo nostro. ℟. Dignum et justum est.

Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutáre, nos tibi semper et ubíque grátias ágere, Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, honórum dator, ordinúmque distribútor, atque officiórum dispósitor, qui in te manens ínnovas ómnia, et cuncta dispónis per verbum, per virtútem, sapientiámque tuam, Jesum Christum Fílium tuum Dóminum nostrum, sempitérna providéntia præparas, et síngulis quibúsque tempóribus aptánda dispénsas. Cujus corpus, Ecclésiam vidélicet tuam cœléstium gratiárum varietáte distínctam, suorúmque connéxam distinctióne membrórum, per legem mirábilem totíus compáginis unítam, in augméntum templi tui créscere, dilataríque largíris; sacri múneris servitútem trinis grádibus ministrórum nómini tuo militáre constítuens, eléctis ab inítio Levi fíljis, qui in mysticis operatiónibus domus tuæ fidélibus excúbiis permanéntes, hæreditátem benedictiónis ætérnæ sorte perpétua possidérent. Super hos quoque Fámulos tuos, quæsumus, Dómine, placátus inténde, quos tuis sacris altáribus servitúros in offícium Diaconátus supplíciter dedicámus. Et nos quidem tamquam hómines divíni sensus, et summæ ratiónis ignári, horum vitam quantum póssumus, æstimámus. Te autem, Dómine, quæ nobis sunt ignóta non tránseunt, te occúlta non fallunt. Tu cógnitor es secretórum; tu scrutátor es córdium. Tu horum vitam cœlésti póteris examináre judício, quo semper prævales, et admíssa purgáre, et ea quæ sunt agénda, concédere.

Hic solus Pontifex manum dexteram extendens ponit super caput cuilibet Ordinando; et nullus alius, quia non ad Sacerdotium, sed ad ministerium consecrantur, dicens singulis:

Accipe Spíritum sanctum, ad robur, et ad resisténdum diábolo et tentatiónibus ejus: In nómine Dómini.

Postea prosequitur in primo tono, extensam tenens manum dexteram, usque in finem Præfationis:

Emitte in eos, quæsumus, Dómine, Spíritum sanctum, quo in opus ministérii tui fidéliter exequéndi septifómis grátiæ tuæ múnere roboréntur. Abúndet in eis totíus forma virtútis, auctóritas modésta, pudor constans, innocéntiæ púritas, et spirituális observántia disciplínæ. In móribus eórum præcépta tua fúlgeant, ut suæ castitátis exémplo imitatiónem sanctam plebs acquírat; et bonum consciéntiæ testimónium præferéntes, in Christo firmi, et stábiles persevérent; dignísque succéssibus de inferióri gradu per grátiam tuam cápere potióra mereántur.

Quad sequitur, dicit submissa voce legendo, ita tamen quod a circumstantibus possit audiri.

Per eúmdem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc Pontifex sedens cum mitra cuilibet Ordinando ante se genuflexo, stolam quam singuli in manu habent, imponit successive super humerum sinistrum, dicens singulis:

Accipe stolam ✠ cándidam de manu Dei, adímple ministérium tuum: potens enim est Deus, ut áugeat tibi grátiam suam: Qui vivit et regnat in sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Faciens super quemlibet eorum signum crucis, et ministri reflectant capita stolæ, et alligent sub brachio dextero.

Post hæc Pontifex accipiens dalmaticam, induit ea quemlibet successive, usque ad humeros, et sic fit usque ad ultimum, quem ea totaliter induit; et hoc, si una tantum sit dalmatica. Si vero quilibet suam habet, tunc singulos sua totaliter induit, dicens cuilibet:

Induat te Dóminus induménto salútis, et vestiménto lætítiæ, et dalmática justítiæ circúmdet te semper: In nómine Dómini. ℟. Amen.

Postremo Pontifex accipit, et tradit omnibus librum Evangeliorum, quem manu dextera tangunt, dicens:*

Accipite potestátem legéndi Evangélium in Ecclésia Dei, tam pro vivis, quam pro defúnctis. In nómine Dómini. ℟. Amen.

Quo facto, Pontifex stans ad altare conversus dicit, sine mitra.

Orémus.

Et ministri:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Et vertens se ad Ordinatos, dicit:

Exaudi, Dómine, preces nostras, et super hos Fámulos tuos Spíritum tuæ bene ✠ dictiónis emítte: ut cœlésti múnere ditáti, et tuæ majestátis grátiam possint acquírere, et bene vivéndi áliis exémplum præbére. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum; qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Orémus.

Domine sancte, Pater fídei, spei, et grátiæ, et profectuum remunerátor, qui in cœléstibus, et terrénis Angelórum ministériis ubíque dispósitis, per ómnia eleménta voluntátis tuæ diffúndis efféctum, hos quoque Fámulos tuos spirituáli dignáre illustráre afféctu; ut tuis obséquiis

* Duo vel tres simul tangunt librum. (Martinucci)

expedíti, sanctis altáribus tuis minístri puri accréscant; et indulgéntia tua purióres, eórum gradu quos Apóstoli tui in septenárium númerum, beáto Stéphano duce ac prævio, Spíritu sancto auctóre, elegérunt, digni exístant, et virtútibus univérsis, quibus tibi servíre opórtet instrúcti, tibi compláceant. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Deinde, cum tempus fuerit, aliquis de noviter Ordinatis dalmatica indutus Evangelium dicet;* Ordinati autem statim, suggerente Archidiacono, redeunt ad loca sua.

* Si Missa legatur, Diaconus leget evangelium.

DEACONSHIP.

Fortis ut mors dilectio.
Love is strong as death.—CANT. 8, 6.

The divine victim was immolated, lying on the cold rock of the grave awaiting the Resurrection which was to transform and glorify it. The third day is come. Hardly have the first rays of the dawn reddened the summits of Calvary than the victim is risen. *Christus resurgens ex mortuis jam non moritur.* He is living; living forever! Death is conquered. Neither the political nor the sacerdotal power has been able to prevent the triumph of Jesus. *Christus vincit! Christus regnat! Christus imperat! Alleluia!*

And on this miracle of the Resurrection rest, as on a solid rock, the faith and the hopes of the Church. Is there any greater strength in the world? The risen Christ is now living a new life, even His body is resplendent and glorified. It seems, therefore, that He belongs to this earth no longer. Still He wishes to remain with us so as to strengthen the foundation of His Church, and to complete the training of the twelve. For the sake of His beloved Church He will spend forty days on earth.

Such is the model offered to the Subdeacon who, a stole on his arm, comes to receive the sacred order of Deaconship. Divine fortitude, pure and celestial life, strong and devoted love for the Church, such are the virtues by which he will imitate his Lord and enter into the spirit of his order. *Fortis ut mors dilectio.*

Whatever may be said of the inferior orders this order is certainly a sacrament. For it is a point of faith defined at Trent that the hierarchy is composed of bishops, priests and ministers. Now the word *minister* must evidently designate at least the deacons of whom the Apostles speak in their writings and whose name means precisely minister. The diaconate is therefore a sacrament which impresses upon the soul the sacramental character and confers grace *ex opere operato*. This is the first grandeur of an order, which has so many others.

It is quite natural therefore that the rites of this ordination should be performed with more solemnity than the preceding ones.

Three parts make up the whole rite: (1) The election of the deacons. (2) The instruction given by the Bishop on their functions and their duties. (3) The conferring of the order.

In this part of the Pontifical, perhaps, the greatest solemnity is exhibited.

1. The Election. From the very beginning, we hear the voice of the Church. Nor do we lose sight of the Church during all this ordination. Love for the Church is the main virtue of the deacon, and if fortitude is his characteristic virtue, this fortitude, we might say, has for its motive, as well as for its object, love for the Church and devotedness to her service. The Church here below is militant, and those who devote themselves to her defence must be strong and valiant. *Fortis ut mors dilectio!*

So far we have heard only the voice of the Bishop. Now a change takes place. The Church, represented by the archdeacon, beseeches the Bishop to confer deaconship on the present subdeacons. *Postulat sancta mater Ecclesia catholica.*

Gentlemen, the Catholic Church begs for your ordination. *Sancta mater Ecclesia.* Is it possible that you could be to such an extent the object of her attention and love! This loving Mother wishes that her children should know our Lord and love Him. She prays the divine Master to give her men able to train those children, to teach and sanctify them. *Postulat!* it is not a simple desire, it is an instant supplication. Just imagine a mother praying for the life of her children! *Postulat.*

However, the Bishop does not accede immediately to her prayer. He wishes to obtain some information as to the character of those subdeacons. *Scis illos dignos esse?* Will they be strong enough for the *onus diaconii*, pure enough, sufficiently well prepared? If a favorable answer cannot be given, he will not ordain them. How suggestive is this preoccupation and hesitation of the Bishop! *Scis illos dignos esse?*

Who will be able to say they are worthy? Nobody of course knows it with infallible certitude.

The answer comes however: *Quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.*

Human frailty is never infallible, however, in so far as man can say, I know, I can testify that they are worthy to assume this responsibility.

Who is it that speaks these words?

It is the archdeacon, but practically his voice is but the echo of another. It is the voice of the Seminary faculty. *Testificor ipsos esse dignos.* What responsibility, gentlemen, this faculty has to assume!

If they allow an unworthy seminarian to enter the sanctuary, what incalculable harm is done to the Church!

It takes years of hard work to repair the scandal given by a bad priest. More than once the Church would have been spared such a calamity, had not a too indulgent love prevented her representatives from striking a painful blow. On the other hand, will they deprive the Church of a minister who may do good work? If so, what great harm caused to souls! And of each and all their decisions they will have to render to God a strict account. Ah! if everybody needs mercy, the members of a Seminary faculty need it in a special degree.

And when present at the ordination, they hear the question: *Scis illos dignos esse?* what emotions thrill their heart! Of course they believe these candidates to be worthy, since they have called them. But all the same do they not feel at times, in their inmost soul, grave apprehensions? "Am I sure that I knew well such or such of these subdeacons? Did he always show himself such as he was? or did he conceal the sad reality under appearances of regularity? Is his life entirely sincere? Are his intentions absolutely pure? Is there no selfish motive in his soul? Had he not made up his mind to enter the priesthood in spite of all?" A confessor possibly is there who knows positively that such or such is not worthy, but his lips are sealed! What an anguish when he hears the answer: *Scio et testificor illos dignos esse.*

Heavy is this responsibility, hard this task. May your sincerity, your openness make it easier, so that when the Bishop asks concerning you: *Scis illos dignos esse?* the answer may be given with absolute confidence: *Scio et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.*

This answer given, the Bishop says: *Deo Gratias.* He will now be able to satisfy the impatient wishes of

the Church. *Postulat Sancta Mater Ecclesia.* However, he needs the help of Heaven. *Auxiliante Domino et Salvatore Jesu Christo.* Since the deacons shall be entrusted with the blood of Our Lord it is only natural that the name of the Saviour should be brought forward in their ordination. *Auxiliante Domino et Salvatore Jesu Christo eligimus.* The Bishop has a right to select his co-laborers.

Still he will ask for further testimony. This election must be confirmed by the people. *Si quis habet aliquid contra illos, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat.* How solemn the tone! *Pro Deo et propter Deum.* No one, of course, will step forth to protest. Although not too late, practically it will never happen. Still, in one way or other, the people have pronounced on your case. The many testimonial letters which you have received should show sufficiently your standing before the public.

Now the Bishop feels more confident: he will proceed to the ordination, with the hope that your promotion shall be really for the greater good of the Church.

2. The Instruction. The Bishop emphasizes the grandeur of the deacon's office. *Cogitate magnopere ad quantum gradum Ecclesiæ ascenditis.* This grandeur comes from the three great functions which are entrusted to him. The Church asked for the ordination of the deacon. Now she entrusts to him Jesus and souls. *Diaconum oportet ministrare ad altare, baptizare et prædicare.* Having mentioned these three functions, the Bishop does not stop to explain them, but passes on immediately to the relations of the deacon with the Church.

The tribe of Levi was in charge of the tabernacle, it is your privilege to succeed to their office. But the tabernacle of old was only a figure. It is the true Church of

God which is now entrusted to you. *In ministerium tabernaculi, i.e., Ecclesiæ Dei eligimini in Levitico officio.*

The Church, he goes on to say, is militant, *incessabili pugna contra inimicos dimicat.* Such is her condition on earth. Therefore those who wish to be her ministers must accept the conditions as they are. They must be soldiers. *Incessabili pugna contra inimicos dimicat.*

Resuming his comparison he goes on to say: The Church is a tabernacle which has to be carried on the shoulders of the deacons, the successors of the Levites. *Ecclesiam Dei portare et munire debetis.* The Church expects you to be her defenders. *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis.* What mark of confidence!

We understand better now why the Church has asked for the ordination of the deacons. *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis!*

One of the most illustrious deacons,* Francis of Assisi, had once a vision: He thought he saw the Church of

*It might be interesting for the ordinands to have the list of the holy deacons whose names are mentioned in the Martyrology. Here it is, as given in GONTIER, *Explication du Pontifical*, pp, 312-313, note.

Januarii: 7, S. Clerus; 8, SS. Theophilus et Julianus; 10, S. Nicanor; 15, S. Maurus; 17, S. Marianus; 21, SS. Augurius et Eulogius; 22, S. Vincentius; 23, S. Parmenas.

Februarii: 1, S. Ephrem; 2, S. Celerinus; 9, SS. Primus et Donatus; 12, S. Modestus; 15, S. Joseph.

Martii: 8, SS. Philemon et Apollonius; 8, S. Pontius; 14, S. Diaconus Ecclesiæ Marsicanæ; 16, S. Cyriacus; 18, S. Tatianus; 18, S. Felix; 19, S. Amantius; 22, S. Octavinus; 26, S. Irenæus; 29, S. Cyrillus; 31, S. Benjamin.

Aprilis: 4, S. Agathopodis; 9, S. Prochorus; 13, S. Papylus; 17, S. Petrus; 19, S. Timon; 22, SS. Aradanes et Abdiesus; 22, SS.

St. John Lateran resting on two pillars, viz., St. Dominic and himself. That meant that both the Dominican and Franciscan orders were intended to reform the Church in the decadence of modern times. This vision is susceptible of a more general interpretation: Holy Church, symbolized by the Church of St. John Lateran, is resting on her deacons. *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis.*

It is a signal honor, indeed, but one which obliges us, in return, to a special love for the Holy Church. We

Lucas et Mucius; 23, SS. Fortunatus et Achilæus; 25, SS. Philon et Agathopodis; 30, S. Jacobus.

Maii: 2, S. Felix; 4, S. Curcodomus; 5, S. Euthymius; 21, SS. Timotheus, Polius et Eutychius; 31, S. Paschalius.

Junii: 1, S. Valens; 2, S. Sanctus: 6, S. Philippus; 7, S. Wallabonsus; 9, S. Vincentius; 16, S. Ferrutio; 17, S. Isaurus; 19, S. Culmatius.

Julii: 3, S. Iræneus; 5, S. Athanasius; 8, S. Torquatus; 8, S. Paulinus; 12, S. Fortunatus; 13, S. Salutaris; 15, S. Catulinus; 16, S. Sisenandus; 19, S. Arsenius; 20, S. Paulus; 17, S. Georgius; 29, S. Abundantius.

Augusti: S. Secindellus; 6, SS. Felicissimus et Agapitus; 10, S. Laurentius; 12, S. Euplius; 16, S. Titus; 17, S. Bonifacius: 23, S. Archelaus.

Septembris: 1, S. Ammon; 4, S. Maximus; 6, S. Cottidus; 7, S. Nemorius; 15, S. Emilias; 16, S. Abundantius; 19, S. Festus; 19, S. S. Sosius et Proclus; 24, S. Thyrsus.

Octobris: 4, S. Franciscus Assisinas; 5, S. Firmatus; 5, S. Firmatus Antissiodorensis: 5, S. Meinon; 9, S. Eleutherius; 11, S. Scubiculus; 20, S. Maximus; 20, S. Georgius; 21, S. Viator; 22, S. Hermes; 25, S. Januarius; 31, S. Nemesius.

Novembris: 1, S. Cæsarius; 3, S. Hilarius; 10, S. Amianus; 15, S. Abibus; 16, S. Eugenius; 19, S. Faustus; 20, S. Sisinius.

Decembris: 1, S. Marianus; 2, S. Marcellus; 10, S. Abundius; 19, S. Timotheus; 23, S. Diaconus B. Anthimi; 23, S. Sabianus; 26, S. Stephanus; 28, S. Domitianus; 40, SS. Exuperantius et Marcellus.

must love her as a queen, we must love her as loyal subjects, who would render her glorious and happy as a mother; we must love her with a filial devotion, strong in proportion to the treachery of her unfaithful children, *semper in procinctu posita*, always on the firing line, to defend her against her enemies from without and within. This love should not be vague and general, but we must really love the actual head of the Church, Our Holy Father Pius X. We must accept his directions, his doctrine, make it more widely known and appreciated. We must love our Bishop, be devoted to him and make his task easier and more consoling. *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis.*

The Church *in concreto* is also in the poor of Jesus Christ. We must love them, we must defend the rights of the humble, of the lowly, of the working classes. This is our duty. *Ecclesiam portare debetis.*

The children, too, are the privileged members of the Church, we must love them as our Lord loved them, when on earth.

There are so many children who know nothing of religion. *Parvuli petierunt et non erat qui frangeret eis.* If today Jeremias could utter the same complaint on account of our negligences, woe unto us.* The children! Why

*"I can find no word strong enough to express my reprobation of the priest who would despise and ostracise these erring little ones. A pastor may be eloquent and effective in the pulpit; he may be zealous in the confessional; he may be fervent at the altar; but these good qualities will not atone for his neglect of the wayward youths of his flock. If it is a fault not to seek for them when they wander away; if it is a reproach to be harsh and cold toward them when they do come; how shall we characterize the act of repelling them from the fold like infectious lambs when they do present themselves, and of treating them as Pariahs and outcasts from the

they are the men of tomorrow; they are the hope and the consolation of the country. It is our duty to make them excellent Christians. It is estimated that more than twenty millions of Catholics have lost their faith in this country during the past century. Would that great apostasy have ever taken place if the children had always been properly attended to.† Mind, gentlemen, that to teach children requires no little science. You must have mastered thoroughly the doctrine so as to be able to make them understand and grasp it. It takes much pa-

circle of the Sunday School? The mission of the priest, like that of his Master, is to heal the wounded and to save that which was lost. With the Apostle he must say, 'The Lord hath given me power unto edification and not unto destruction.'"—CARDINAL GIBBONS, *The Ambassador of Christ*, p. 309–310.

†"Much has been said regarding the loss of faith in this country during the present century. Some writers, no doubt, have exaggerated the number of souls that, in different parts of the country, have drifted away from the moorings of their fathers.

Without attempting to give an estimate of the leakage, two facts must be conceded: (1) that the loss is appalling to all those who value the precious gift of catholic belief; (2) that the greatest injury has resulted from the neglect of early Christian education. Archbishop Kenrick, of Baltimore, a prelate never suspected of exaggeration, once remarked in my presence that, as a result of his personal experience and observation, hundreds, nay thousands had been bereft of their sacred heritage, because their youthful training had been overlooked. They were sent to schools in which their religion was either studiously ignored or openly assailed. They had neither the knowledge to refute the misstatements of their opponents, nor the courage to resist their shafts of ridicule, the most overwhelming of all arguments to sensitive youth. The result was that they abandoned their faith in the Christian religion altogether, or they passively conformed to the prevailing sect of their environment." —CARDINAL GIBBONS, *l.c.*, p. 327.

tience and effort to obtain substantial results. And since immigration brings to our shores hundreds and thousands of foreign children, it is a duty for you to become able to teach them so far as possible in their native language—*omnibus omnia factus sum.* This you have to do for the love of the Church. *Ecclesiam portare debetis.*

The Church *in concreto*, she is still nearer to you—even in the Seminary. Your brother seminarians are her specially beloved sons. You might see it clearly were you allowed to read in these chosen souls the mystery of the love and mercy of God for them. But have you not the most evident proof of this love in the fact that the Church desired your own ordination? Now, it is on those fellow-seminarians as on yourselves that the fondest hopes of the Church are resting. Who could say what powers for good, what promises for Catholicity, what fervent apostles, are contained in a gathering like ours?

In what way should you manifest your love for this privileged part of the Church? The Pontifical says: *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis exemplo perfecto.* Just consider for a moment what is the situation of the deacons in the Seminary. The younger seminarians have their eyes on the deacons. Anything they are told, they are naturally inclined to verify; they test it by what the deacons are doing. Their principle is right, after all. Often they are told that experience teaches many things.

They conclude, therefore, the best criterion is the conduct of the deacons. Accordingly they reason thus: "It is to be supposed that the deacons prepare themselves in the best possible manner for the priesthood. They have had more experience than I have. They must know better than I do what is to be done, what is to be avoided.

So, as a practical rule of conduct, I will do just what they are doing. I am sure it will be pretty safe; even it will be the best way. Their fervor should be the measure of mine, since being nearer to the priesthood, they are supposed to be more fervent than beginners."

Let us take for granted that the deacons give good example. Immediately the community is led in a very efficacious manner, to a more perfect life, and owing to this, more than one seminarian will become a fervent priest. *Ecclesiam portare debetis exemplo perfecto.*

When Our Lord at the sight of the chalice, fell to the ground, "an angel appeared to him strengthening him." Such ought to be the presence of the deacons in the community. *Apparuit angelus confortans.* Their example ought to give to their younger brothers the strength necessary to make all the sacrifices of the seminary life.

I really do not know of any higher mission than this apostolate. Very often you will hear of social duties. This is perfectly right. We have not only individual duties, but being members of a society, we have duties towards this society, and a person may lose his soul for having neglected his social duties just as well as for the neglect of individual duties. Here this social duty is clear, well defined, precise, and I should add: extremely efficacious. It is a strict duty for the deacons (and the same, to great extent, may be said of the subdeacons) not to take advantage of their situation as seniors to encourage laxity. Deacons who would give bad example are simply traitors to the Church. Traitors! I find no other word. If I had to give a counsel to Satan for the best of his interests, I would suggest he should try to induce the deacons to give bad example! Moreover the deacons

have the positive obligation of availing themselves of this very situation to help their brothers to prepare, as they should, for the holy priesthood, and the most efficacious way is good example, nay, perfect example. *Ecclesiam portare et munire debetis exemplo perfecto.*

In early centuries the deacons had greater external influence than now. They were treasurers. Their functions are now in the hands of vicars general and chancellors. But certainly their influence could not be greater than it is now. For in the present situation, they have a very positive and serious influence in seminaries. Now it is certainly on the vitality and fervor of the seminaries that the strength of the priesthood depends, and, consequently, the future of the Church.

Beside the potent force of example, the deacon has two other sources of power which he must consecrate to the service of Holy Mother Church, and which must be the practical form of his love for the Church. *Ecclesiam portare debetis prædicatu divino.*

You do not expect me to show you what a mighty instrument for good is Christian preaching; or how the zealous preacher can prove his love for the Church. I simply wish to indicate what is meant by *prædicatu divino.* St. Paul has given the programme of truly divine preaching. *Nos autem prædicamus Christum et hunc crucifixum.* Therefore we should preach the Gospel, only the Gospel, and the whole Gospel. This is the only means of preaching our Lord, of accomplishing good, of sanctifying the Church. *Ecclesiam portare debetis prædicatu divino.*

A power superior to that of eloquence, the most divine of all, is prayer and intercession. Now the deacon has to carry Jesus in his hands, as St. Joseph used to do in

Egypt and at Nazareth. He stands near the altar when Jesus is immolated, he offers the sacrifice with the priest, (*Offerimus tibi, Domine, calicem salutaris*) even as Mary standing at the foot of the Cross.

He is called in the Pontifical *comminister et cooperator corporis et sanguinis Domini.* He has a share in this grand action, which is nothing else but the continuation of the Incarnation of the Son of God and of the sacrifice of the Cross. The deacon is associated with the divine prayer of the holy victim. It is he who opens the tabernacle for Our Lord to come to us in holy Communion, and he who closes the door for Him in his prison of love, so that our Divine Saviour may remain with us day and night. Not only the Church has to rest upon his shoulders, but Christ rests in his hands.

Is it not perfectly natural that the Bishop should ask from him a higher degree in holiness than from the subdeacon, a life perfectly pure and celestial? *Estote assumpti a carnalibus desideriis, a terrenis concupiscentiis.* This is only negative. The Bishop does not find any single word sufficient to express the perfection required from the deacon. To convey his idea, he heaps up all the expressions which human language can afford. *Estote nitidi, mundi, puri, casti.* Be pure, be pure, be pure, be pure! *Sicut decet ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei.* Here we reach the highest function of the deacon. In former times, when communion was received under the two species of bread and wine, the deacon used to communicate the faithful, presenting to them the sacred chalice filled with the blood of Christ. Now his ministry in the distribution of the Holy Communion is not needed, since Holy Communion is given only under the

species of bread. However, he could, even he should, give communion in case of necessity. Even without necessity, he might obtain the permission of distributing the sacred Eucharist.

Having such high powers, how great should be his virtue! And if he is holy, as he should be, how powerful will be his prayer, how useful will he be to the Church by his example—*exemplo perfecto*—by his preaching—*prædicatu divino*—by his prayers—*ornatu sancto!* How practical and efficient will thus be his love for the Church!

3. CONFERRING OF THE ORDER. After the instruction, comes the conferring of the Holy Order of Deaconship. This is done with an unusual solemnity. The Bishop begins a solemn Preface as on the greatest festivals. *Dominus vobiscum.** This will be the sacramental word of the deacon, it is but natural to use it now. Besides

* We cannot refrain from quoting the letter of Henri Perreyve (then a deacon) to Charles Perraud on the celebration of his first Mass. "He choses," says Cardinal Gibbons, "the text 'May the Lord be with you.' He utters the word as one grand chord, then with the several notes he gives forth a harmony of blessing, good wishes, thanksgiving, grand aspirations, sublime conceptions, which end in a divine rhapsody, and leave in the heart of the hearer a minor tone of longing that he, too, might know such friendship—human and divine."

The following is the letter to which the Cardinal refers:

" 'THE LORD BE WITH YOU.'

"Such is the sacramental word of the deacon, the only word which I may address to you, my dear friend and brother, before the holy altar. However, I speak it from out the fulness of my heart, and with all the depths of meaning which those sacred words imply.

"Yea, the Lord be with you, dear brother!—with you this morning at the altar, when you celebrate your first Mass, to receive

the Holy Ghost will descend upon these subdeacons in a moment. It is fitting to say: *Dominus vobiscum. Sursum corda.*

In this Preface there are two leading ideas, with which we are already quite familiar. The beauty of the Church,

your virgin troth, and to answer to your immortal vows by that return of love which surpasses all love.

"May He be with you throughout that great day, to preserve within your soul the perfume of heavenly incense, the odor of a sacrifice which has had a beginning, but which, by God's gracious mercy, shall have no end. May He be with you tomorrow, to make you feel that the joys of the Lord have about them something eternal, and which, far otherwise than the joys of this earth, may be drawn upon ever without danger of exhaustion.

"May He be with you when, after the first rapturous transports, you will realize that you are a priest for others, and when, descending from Thabor, you seek out the suffering and the ignorant, and those who hunger and thirst for true Light and the true Life.

"May He be with you in your sorrows, to console you; in your joys, to sanctify them; in your desires, to make them fruitful! *Memor sit omnis sacrificii et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat.*

"May He be with you, dear Charles, if you be left alone in the world; if our friendship is soon cut short; if you must go through life with no other support than the arm of a divine Friend.

"May He be with you as a young priest; with you when grown old in the struggles of the priesthood and in the service of God and men; with you at the hour of death, which will bring to your lips, by another's hand, the same Jesus whom your trembling hands have even now placed there!

"Yes, my dear friend! I sum up all that my heart can contain of longings, of wishes, of hopes—all in a single wish: May the Lord be ever with you! This will be, here below, the life of a holy priest; and, hereafter, Heaven itself.

"May the Lord be ever with you!

"Dearest Charles, give me your blessing! I embrace you affectionately, and I feel close pressed against the heart of our ever-beloved and divine Master."—*Catholic World*, June, 1897, p. 391–392.

the body, the spouse of Our Lord, from which results the sublimity of the deaconship, or ministry in the Church. At the same time a certain fear, a kind of apprehension on the part of the Bishop. Even after the testimony of the archdeacon and of the people, *nos quidem tamquam homines divini sensus et summæ raiionis ignari, horum vitam quantum possumus æstimamus*, we are not infallible; Thou, O Lord, who knowest all the secrets of their hearts, judge them. *Te autem, Domine, quæ nobis sunt ignota non transeunt, te occulta non fallunt, Tu cognitor es secretorum, Tu scrutator es cordium.*

Then the Bishop interrupts the Preface; the candidates come before him. He imposes his right hand on the head of each one, and pronounces the formula: *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum, ad robur et ad resistendum diabolo et tentationibus ejus, in nomine Domini*; then the prayer: *Emitte in eos*, etc. They are now deacons.* The Holy Ghost descends upon them and pervades their soul. The mystery of Pentecost is enacted again. *Spiritus Paraclitus veniet in vos!*

Why does the Holy Spirit come upon the deacons? To enable them to fulfil their divine ministry. They shall have to preach; the Holy Ghost will bestow upon them the gift of burning conviction, and persuasive modesty. *Abundet in eis auctoritas modesta.*†

*"The formula: *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*, etc., which accompanies the imposition of the Bishop's hand in the ordination to Deaconship was introduced into the rituals, about the 13th or the 14th century, probably because no form expressive enough was found in the long prayer which alone, up to that time, had been used."—POURRAT, *Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 79.

† "What may deprive a young priest of the reverence and trust of the faithful? The faults of boyhood: levity, thoughtlessness,

They shall have to bear the body of Our Lord. He will give them this splendor of innocence so necessary. *Innocentiæ puritas. Innocentia* is so beautiful. *Puritas* so expressive. *Innocentiæ puritas* must be dazzling!

They have to give good example. The Holy Ghost will make them holy. *Abundet in eis spiritualis observantia disciplinæ. In moribus eorum præcepta tua fulgeant, ut suæ castitatis exemplo imitationem sanctam plebs acquirat.*

But above all, there is a virtue which is necessary to the deacon, and which should be henceforth the object of his endeavors, of his examinations of conscience, of his progress, this is fortitude. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.* His love for the Church must be strong as death. *Fortis ut mors dilectio.*

St. Thomas teaches that fortitude is a condition of all the other virtues. Every virtue supposes a struggle. *Virius* comes from *vir.* The deacon should have this *virility. Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.* His life is a life of struggle, and his enemies are the enemies of the Church, *ad resistendum diabolo et tentationibus ejus.*

immaturity, precipitancy, an inordinate love of sports and games, a lack of repose. What makes a young priest respected? Seriousness of manner, maturity of thought, earnestness of purpose, steadiness in carrying out all that appertains to duty; also learning, piety, enlightened zeal, self-respect, a sense of authority tempered by modesty: '*auctoritas modesta*,' as the Pontifical says in the rite of ordination; finally the religious spirit, that is, the spirit of reverence imparting a tone of thoughtfulness and deliberation to the whole man. Each of these helps to dispel the unfavorable impression which might attach to the youthful priest, and therefore it becomes his duty to cultivate them sedulously in the early years of his ministry."—Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, S.S., *Daily Thoughts*, p. 127–128.

What is for the deacon the field of this virtue of fortitude?

The devil fears the effect of prayer. Therefore he will certainly endeavor to neutralize the prayer of the deacon; routine is a tyrannical master, under this tyrant the devil will try to enslave the deacon. Routine is the death of prayer and fervor; and still, without generous resolution and constant efforts, we can hardly avoid it. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*

They are called *Tribus amabilis.* Gentleness is necessary for success, but it demands self-denial and fortitude.

The brilliant purity of the deacon displeases the devil. He will raise the clouds of passion to obscure this divine light. Our heart needs so much strength. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*

The deacon knows that the tabernacle is reserved exclusively for the Blessed Sacrament. Lights and flowers and all the other ornaments should be kept at a distance. Our heart is a tabernacle—lawful affections may adorn it outwardly. Even they must. Warm friendships formed among the deacons, before they leave the Seminary, are one of the best sources of strength against the difficulties of the ministry. As St. Basil says: *Quos nos maxime conjungebat Deus et præstantiorum rerum amor.* But in the tabernacle of his heart Jesus alone. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur!*

Satan knows that as long as the deacon, or the priest is disinterested, he shall be powerful in his ministry; and if he is a lover of poverty he will do wonders in our materialistic age. Satan then will try to seduce the heart of the deacon by love of temporal goods, knowing that such a love will paralyze his ministry. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*

The most powerful virtue is humility, because it substitutes the divine help, the divine action and efficacy for our poor human weakness and resources. On this point, therefore, the devil will concentrate his fiercest attacks. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*

"The priest is more than once compared by St. Paul to a soldier: and rightly, for the more of the soldier there is in him, the better priest he is. . . . . The Roman soldier that St. Paul had in mind was separated from family, kindred, home, country; indeed, everywhere the soldier's life is a life of detachment. In active warfare he has to hold himself always in readiness; at any time he may be called upon to face certain death. And therefore he is best without a family. If he has left behind him persons tenderly loved, it is not good that he should give them much thought; such memories would unman him. In a word the life of a soldier in active service is a life of detachment, of self-devotion; a ready gift of his energies, and, if need be, of his life, to the service of his country.

"What else is the life of a priest, if he be true to his calling? His time, his energies, his influence, all his gifts, belong to the great purpose for which he became a priest. Like St. Paul, he is ready to give his very life for it: "I most gladly will spend, and be spent myself, for your souls." 2 Cor. XII, 15. The qualities of the soldier are no less necessary in the priest, courage, endurance, discipline.*

The priest is a soldier. He must work and fight. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum ad robur.*

* Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, S.S., *Daily Thoughts*, ch. xxx. The priest a soldier, p. 118–119.

The ordination is drawing to a close. The Bishop wishes to symbolize by vestments all the teachings which he gave to his deacons, and he places the stole* upon their shoulder. *Accipe stolam candidam de manu Dei.* The stole is put on the left shoulder, so as to leave the right arm free to fight the battle of the Lord, to defend His Church against her enemies, whilst his left shoulder lovingly and bravely bears the yoke of the Savior.

Above the stole, the dalmatic—vestment of joy and sanctity. *Induat te Dominus indumento salutis et vestimento lætitiæ et dalmatica justitiæ circumdet te semper.*

Then the deacon receives the book of the Gospel, from which he shall learn the true Beatitudes, the Gospel from which he will derive fortitude and love, the Gospel which he is to preach by his word and his example.

A last prayer. The Bishop speaks of the law of progress. *Domine Sancte, profectuum remunerator.* From the rewarder of progress what does he ask? *Ut altaribus tuis ministri puri accrescant.*

The dawn of Easter morning was the prelude to the expansion of the Church. Deaconship is a dawn, a presage of fecundity. When singing the Gospel, he says: *Dominus vobiscum.* The word of the annunciation: *Dominus tecum! Ecce concipies et paries filium!* Very soon he will be a priest, and he shall have to increase by his apostolic labors the number of the children of Holy Mother Church. *Ecclesiam portare debetis.*

Let him say then with Mary, morning after morning, during this blessed year of his diaconate: *Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum!*

*On the stole, see DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship*, p. 390–394. Cf. THURSTON, S.J., *Lent and Holy Week.*

DE ORDINATIONE PRESBYTERI

PRO ordinatione Presbyterorum parentur oleum Catechumenorum; calix cum vino et aqua; patena, et hostia desuper posita; medulla panis, et bacile cum buccali pro manibus abluendis, quas singuli ad suas mappulas extergunt.

Diaconis ordinatis, Pontifex ad sedendum in sede sua, vel in faldistorio, in plano juxta cornu Epistolæ accedit, et cantatur Tractus, usque ad ultimum versum exclusive; vel si sit infra Octavam Pentecostes, Tractus, et Sequentia, usque ad ultimum versum exclusive. Interim accedunt duo Capellani cum libro, et candela ante Pontificem, qui ex eo legit ipsum Tractum, et Sequentiam, usque ad ultimum versum exclusive. Deinde Pontifex cum mitra revertitur ante altare, ubi sedet super faldistorium.

Tunc Archidiaconus vocat Ordinandos voce intelligibili, dicens:

Accédant qui ordinándi sunt ad órdinem Presbyterátus.

Et mox nominatim leguntur per Notarium, prout supra dictum est, nulla tamen de titulo facta mentione. Tunc illi more Diaconorum parati, amictu, alba, cingulo, stola, et manipulo, tenentes planetas super brachium sinistrum complicatas, et in manu dextera candelas, ac mappulas albas pro ligandis et lavandis manibus, ad Pontificem accedunt, et coram eo in modum coronæ se disponunt. Tunc Archidiaconus præsentat Ordinandos Pontifici, dicens:

Reverendissime pater, póstulat sancta mater Ecclésia Cathólica, ut hos præséntes Diáconos ad onus Presbytérii ordinétis.

Et Pontifex interrogat, dicens:

Scis illos esse dignos?

Respondet Archidiaconus:

Quantum humána fragílitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testíficor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus offícii.

Pontifex dicit:

Deo grátias.

Et annuntiat Clero, et populo, dicens:

Quoniam, fratres charíssimi, rectóri navis et navígio deferéndis éadem est, vel securitátis rátio, vel commúnis timóris; par eórum debet esse senténtia, quorum causa commúnis exístit. Neque enim fuit frustra a Pátribus institútum, ut de electióne illórum, qui ad régimen altáris adhibéndi sunt, consulátur étiam pópulus: quia de vita, et conversatióne præsentándi, quod nonnúmquam ignorátur a plúribus, scitur a paucis, et necésse est, ut facílius ei, quis obediéntiam exhíbeat ordináto, cui assénsum præbúerit ordinándo. Horum síquidem Diaconórum in Presbyteros, auxiliánte Dómino, ordinandórum conversátio (quantum mihi vidétur) probáta, et Deo plácita exístit, et digna (ut arbitror) ecclesiástici honóris augmento. Sed ne unum fortásse, vel paucos, aut decípiat assénsio, vel fallat affféctio, senténtia est expeténda multórum. Itaque quid de eórum áctibus aut móribus novéritis, quid de mérito sentiátis, líbera voce pandátis; et his testimónium Sacerdótii magis pro mérito, quam affectióne áliqua, tribuátis. Si quis ígitur habet áliquid contra illos, pro Deo, et propter Deum, cum fidúcia éxeat, et dicat; verúmtamen memor sit conditiónis suæ.

Postea Pontifex, facta aliqua mora, convertens sermonem suum ad Ordinandos, admonet eos, dicens:

Consecrandi, fílii dilectíssimi, in Presbyterátus offícium' illud digne suscípere, ac suscéptum laudabíliter éxequi studeátis. Sacerdótem étenim opórtet offérre, benedícere, præésse, prædicáre, et baptizáre. Cum magno quippe

timóre ad tantum gradum ascendéndum est, ac providéndum, ut cœléstis sapiéntia, probi mores, et diutúrna justítiæ observátio ad id eléctos comméndent. Unde Dóminus præcípiens Móysi, ut septuagínta viros de univérso Israel in adjutórium suum elígeret, quibus Spíritus sancti dona divíderet, suggéssit, quos tu nosti, quod senes pópuli sunt. Vos síquidem in septuagínta viris, et sénibus signáti estis; si per Spíritum septifórmem, Decálogum legis custodiéntes, probi, et matúri in sciéntia símíliter, et ópere éritis. Sub eódem quoque mystério, et eádem figúra, in novo Testaménto, Dóminus septuagínta duos elégit, ac binos ante se in prædicatiónem misit: ut docéret verbo simul, et facto, minístros Ecclésiæ suæ, fide et ópere debére esse perféctos; seu géminæ dilectiónis, Dei scílicet, et próximi virtúte fundátos. Tales ítaque esse studeátis, ut in adjutórium Móysi, et duódecim Apostolórum, Episcopórum vidélicet catholicórum, qui per Móysen, et Apóstolos figurántur, digne, per grátiam Dei, éligi valeátis. Hac certe mira varietáte Ecclésia sancta circúmdatur, ornátur, et régitur; cum álii in ea Pontífices, álii minóris órdinis Sacerdótes, Diáconi, et Subdiáconi, diversórum órdinum viri consecrántur; et ex multis, et altérnæ dignitátis membris unum Corpus Christi effícitur. Itaque, fílii dilectíssimi, quos ad nostrum adjutórium, fratrum nostrórum arbítrium consecrándos elégit, serváte in móribus vestris castæ, et sanctæ vitæ integritátem. Agnóscite, quod ágitis. Imitámini, quod tractátis; quátenus mortis Domínicæ mystérium celebrántes, mortificáre membra vestra a vítiis et concupiscéntiis ómnibus procurétis. Sit doctrína vestra spirituális medicína pópulo Dei. Sit odor vitæ vestræ delectaméntum Ecclésiæ Christi; ut prædicatíone, atque exémplo

ædificétis domum, id est famíliam Dei; quátenus nec nos de vestra provectióne, nec vos de tanti offícii susceptióne damnári a Dómino, sed remunerári pótius mereámur: Quod ipse nobis concédat per grátiam suam. ℟. Amen.

Si non sint factæ ordinationes Subdiaconorum vel Diaconorum, dicuntur Litaniæ, ut supra in ordinatione Subdiaconorum dictum est, p. 63.

Post hæc surgunt omnes, et Ordinandis coram Pontifice binis, et binis successive genuflectentibus, Pontifex stans ante faldistorium suum cum mitra, et nulla oratione, nulloque cantu præmissis, imponit simul utramque manum super caput cujuslibet ordinandi successive, nihil dicens. Idemque faciunt post eum omnes Sacerdotes, qui adsunt, quorum tres, aut plures planetis, vel saltem cum stolis parati; si commode fieri potest, esse deberent. Quo facto, tam Pontifex, quam Sacerdotes, tenent manus dexteras extensas super illos. Et Pontifex stans cum mitra, dicit:

Orémus, fratres charíssimi, Deum Patrem omnipoténtem, ut super hos fámulos suos, quos ad Presbytérii munus elégit, cœléstia dona multíplicet, et quod ejus dignatióne suscípiunt, ipsíus consequántur auxílio. Per Christum Dóminum nostrum. ℟. Amen.

Pontifex, deposita mitra conversus ad altare, dicit:

Orémus.

Et ministri:

Flectámus génua. ℟. Leváte.

Et mox conversus ad Ordinandos, dicit:

Exaudi nos, quæsumus Dómine Deus noster, et super hos fámulos tuos bene ✠ dictiónem Sancti Spíritus et grátiæ Sacerdotális infúnde virtútem; ut quos tuæ pietátis aspéctibus offérimus consecrándos, perpétua múneris tui

largitáte prosequáris. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus Sancti Deus:

Tum, extensis manibus ante pectus, dicit:

Per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen. ℣. Dóminus vobíscum. ℟. Et cum spíritu tuo. ℣. Sursum corda. ℟. Habémus ad Dóminum. ℣. Grátias agámus Dómino Deo nostro. ℟. Dignum, et justum est.

Vere dignum, et justum est, æquum, et salutáre, nos tibi semper, et ubíque grátias ágere, Dómine sancte, Pater omnípotens, ætérne Deus, honórum auctor, et distribútor ómnium dignitátum; per quem profíciunt univérsa; per quem cuncta firmántur, amplificátis semper in mélius natúræ rationális increméntis, per órdinem cóngrua ratióne dispósitum. Unde et sacerdotáles gradus, atque offícia Levitárum, Sacraméntis mysticis institúta crevérunt; ut cum Pontífices summos regéndis pópulis præfecísses, ad eórum societátis, et óperis adjuméntum, sequéntis órdinis viros, et secúndæ dignitátis elígeres. Sic in erémo per septuagínta virórum prudéntium mentes, Móysi spíritum propagásti, quibus ille adjutóribus usus, in pópulo innúmeras multitúdines fácile gubernávit. Sic et in Eleázarum, et Ithamárum fílios Aaron patérnæ plenitúdinis abundántiam transfudísti; ut ad hóstias salutáres, et frequentióris offícii Sacraménta ministérium suffíceret Sacerdótum. Hac providéntia, Dómine, Apóstolis fílii tui Doctóres fídei cómites addidísti, quibus illi orbem totum secúndis prædicatiónibus implevérunt. Quaprópter infirmitáti quoque nostræ, Dómine, quæsumus, hæc adjuménta largíre; qui quanto fragilióres sumus, tanto his plúribus indigémus. Da, quæsumus,

omnipótens Pater, in hos Fámulos tuos Presbytérii dignitátem, ínnova ín viscéribus eórum Spíritum sanctitátis; ut accéptum a te, Deus, secúndi mériti munus obtíneant; censurámque morum exémplo suæ conversatiónis insínuent. Sint próvidi cooperatóres órdinis nostri; elúceat in eis tótius forma justítiæ, ut bonam ratiónem dispensatiónis sibi créditæ redditúri, ætérnæ beatitúdinis præmia consequántur.

Quod sequitur, legat submissa voce, ita tamen, quod a circumstantibus audiri possit.

Per eúmdem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Pontifex sedet, accepta mitra, et reflectit orarium, sive stolam ab humero sinistro cujuslibet, capiens partem, quæ retro pendet, et imponens super dexterum humerum, aptat eam ante pectus, in modum crucis, singulis dicens:

Accipe jugum Dómini; jugum enim ejus suáve est, et onus ejus leve.

Postea imponit cuilibet successive casulam usque ad scapulas, quam quilibet teneat super humeros complicatam, a parte anteriori deorsum dependentem, singulis dicens:

Accipe vestem sacerdotálem, per quam cháritas intellígitur; potens est enim Deus, ut áugeat tibi charitátem, et opus perféctum. ℟. Deo grátias.

Surgit Pontifex sine mitra, et omnibus genua flectentibus, dicit:

Deus sanctificatiónum ómnium auctor, cujus vera consecrátio, plénaque benedíctio est: tu, Dómine, super hos

fámulos tuos, quos ad Presbytérii honórem dedicámus, manus tuæ bene ✠ dictiónis infúnde; ut gravitáte áctuum, et censúra vivéndi probent se senióres, his institúti disciplínis, quas Tito, et Timótheo Paulus expósuit; ut in lege tua die ac nocte meditántes, quod légerint, credant; quod credíderint, dóceant; quod docúerint, imiténtur; justítiam, constántiam, misericórdiam, fortitúdinem, cæterásque virtútes in se osténdant; exémplo præbeant, admonitióne confírment; ac purum et immaculátum ministérii sui donum custódiant; et in obséquium plebis tuæ, panem et vinum in Corpus et Sánguinem Fílii tui immaculáta benedictióne transfórment; et inviolábili charitáte in virum perféctum, in mensúram ætátis plenitúdinis Christi, in die justi, et ætérni judícii Dei consciéntia pura, fide vera, Spíritu Sancto pleni, resúrgant. Per eúmdem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit, et regnat in unitáte ejúsdem Spíritus sancti Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Tunc Pontifex sine mitra ante altare conversus, flexis genibus incipit alta voce, schola prosequente Hymnum.

Veni, Creator Spiritus.
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia
Quæ tu creasti pectora.

Surgit Pontifex, et facit ut in fine hymni habetur: interim schola prosequitur hymnum; qui, si propter Ordinandorum multitudinem necesse fuerit, repetatur, omisso primo versu.

Qui díceris Paráclitus,
Altíssimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis, cháritas,
Et spiritális únctio.

Tu septifórmis múnere,
Dígitus patérnæ déxteræ.
Tu rite promíssum Patris,
Sermóne ditans gúttura.

Accénde lumen sénsibus,
Infúnde amórem córdibus,
Infírma nostri córporis,
Virtúte firmans pérpeti.

Hostem repéllas lóngius,
Pacémque dones prótinus,
Ductóre sic te prævio,
Vitémus omne nóxium.

Per te sciámus da Patrem,
Noscámus atque Fílium,
Teque utriúsque Spíritum,
Credámus omni témpore.

Deo Patri sit glória,
Et Fílio qui a mórtuis
Surréxit, ac Paráclito,
In sæculórum sæcula.

Amen

Dicto primo versu, surgit Pontifex, et sedet in faldistorio cum mitra; et depositis chirothecis, et annulo pontificali reassumpto, ponitur ei gremiale, sive mappula super gremium, et singuli Ordinandi successive coram eo genua flectunt; et Pontifex cum oleo cathechumenorum inungit unicuique ambas manus simul junctas, in modum crucis, producendo cum pollice suo dextero in dictum

oleum intincto duas lineas, videlicet, a pollice dexteræ manus usque ad indicem sinistræ, et a pollice sinistræ usque ad indicem dexteræ, ungendo mox totaliter palmas, dicens, dum quemlibet inungit:

Consecrare, et sanctificáre dignéris, Dómine, manus istas per istam unctiónem, et nostram bene ✠ dictiónem. ℟. Amen.

Pontifex producit manu dextera signum crucis super manus illius quem ordinat, et prosequitur,

Ut quæcúmque benedíxerint, benedicántur, et quæcúmque consecráverint, consecréntur, et sanctificéntur, in nómine Dómini nostri Jesu Christi.

Et quilibet ordinandus respondet:

Amen.

Tum Pontifex claudit, seu jungit manus cuilibet successive, quas sic consecratas aliquis ministrorum Pontificis albo panniculo lineo simul, videlicet, dexteram super sinistram alligat; et mox unusquisque ad ordinem suum redit; et sic clausas, et alligatas manus tenet. Omnium manibus unctis, et consecratis, Pontifex pollicem mica panis tergit; tum tradit cuilibet successive Calicem cum vino, et aqua, et Patenam superpositam cum Hostia, et ipsi illam accipiunt inter indices et medios digitos, et cuppam Calicis et Patenam simul tangunt, Pontifice singulis dicente:

Accipe potestátem offérre sacrifícium Deo, missásque celebráre, tam pro vivis, quam pro defúnctis. In nómine Dómini. ℟. Amen.

His peractis, Pontifex lavat manus cum medulla panis, et aqua lotionis hujusmodi projicitur in sacrarium; deinde cum mitra revertitur ad sedem suam, vel ad faldistorium in cornu Epistolæ, in plano sibi paratum, ubi sedet cum mitra. Et chorus cantat ultimum versum Tractus, vel Sequentiæ, sive *Alleluia*. Interim accedunt duo cappellani ante Pontificem cum libro et candela, qui ex eo legit dictum

ultimum versum Tractus, vel Sequentiæ, sive *Alleluia*. Legit etiam secrete, *Munda cor meum*, atque Evangelium.

Interea unus ex Diaconis noviter ordinatis accedit ad altare, cum textu Evangelii ante pectus, et dicit, *Munda cor meum*, et cantat Evangelium. Interim parantur per ministros hostiæ super altare, pro numero Ordinatorum in ordinibus sacris, qui omnes communicare debent, et proceditur in Missa ordine solito. Interea dum Offertorium cantatur, vel etiam prius, ordinati Sacerdotes poterunt lavare manus suas cum medulla panis, et aqua bene mundare, atque extergere mappulis illis, quibus ligatæ erant, et aqua ablutionis hujusmodi projiciatur in sacrarium.

Pontifex vero, Offertorio lecto, accepta mitra, vadit ad faldistorium ante medium altaris, et ibi sedens accipit offertorium ab omnibus Ordinatis, qui omnes accedunt bini, et bini ad Pontificem, coram quo genuflexi offerunt illi singulas candelas accensas, et osculantur ejus manum, primo Presbyteri, tum Diaconi successive et alii suo ordine.

Accepto singulorum offertorio, Pontifex lavat manus, et surgit sine mitra, ac tollitur faldistorium, et prosequitur Missam.

Presbyteri vero ordinati, post Pontificem, vel hinc et inde, ubi magis commodum erit, in terra genuflexi habeant libros coram se, dicentes omnia de Missa, prout dicit Pontifex.

Presbyteri ante Communionem non dicunt Confessionem; nec datur eis absolutio, quia concelebrant Pontifici.

Pontifex, lotis manibus, mitra deposita, stans in cornu Epistolæ altaris, versus ad illud inchoat in cantu, schola prosequente, Responsorium, quod a Septuagesima usque ad Pascha dicitur sine *Alleluia*.

Jam non dicam vos servos, sed amícos meos, quia ómnia cognovístis, quæ operátus sum in médio vestri, Allelúia.* Accípite Spíritum sanctum in vobis Paráclitum.* Ille est, quem Pater mittet vobis, Allelúia. ℣. Vos amíci mei estis, si fecéritis, quæ ego præcípio vobis.* Accípite. ℣. Glória Patri, et Fílio, et Spirítui sancto.* Ille est, quem.

Incœpto responsorio, Pontifex, accepta mitra, vertit se ad Presbyteros ordinatos, qui ante altare coram ipso stantes profitentur fidem, quam prædicaturi sunt, dicentes:

Credo in Deum, Patrem omnipoténtem, creatórem cœli et terræ. Et in Jesum Christum Fílium ejus únicum, Dóminum nostrum. Qui concéptus est de Spíritu sancto, natus ex María Vírgine. Passus sub Póntio Piláto, crucifíxus, mórtuus, et sepúltus. Descéndit ad ínferos; tértia die resurréxit a mórtuis. Ascéndit ad cœlos, sedet ad déxteram Dei Patris omnipoténtis. Inde ventúrus est judicáre vivos, et mórtuos. Credo in Spíritum sanctum. Sanctam Ecclésiam Cathólicam. Sanctórum communiónem. Remissiónem peccatorum. Carnis resurrectiónem. Vitam ætérnam. Amen.

Quo finito, Pontifex cum mitra sedens super faldistorium, ante medium altaris, imponit ambas manus super capita singulorum coram eo genuflectentium, dicens cuilibet:

Accipe Spíritum sanctum, quorum remíseris peccáta, remittúntur eis; et quorum retinúeris, reténta sunt.

Deinde explicans casulam, quam unusquisque habet super humeros complicatam, induit illa quemlibet, singulis dicens:

Stola innocéntiæ índuat te Dóminus.

Et mox unusquisque iterum ad Pontificem accedit, et genuflexus ponit manus suas junctas inter manus Pontificis dicentis cuilibet, si suus est Ordinarius:

Promittis mihi, et successóribus meis reveréntiam, et obediéntiam?

Et ille respondet:

Promítto.

Si vero Pontifex non est suus Ordinarius, cum manus eorum inter suas tenet, ut præfertur, dicit singulis Presbyteris sæcularibus: *Promittis Pontifici Ordinario tuo, etc.* Singulis vero Regularibus: *Promittis Prælato Ordinario tuo, etc.*

Promittis Pontífici, vel Prælato Ordinário tuo, pro témpore existénti, reveréntiam, et obediéntiam?

Et ille respondet:

Promítto.

Tunc Pontifex tenens manus illius inter suas, osculatur unumquemque,* dicens:

Pax Dómini sit semper tecum.

Et ille respondet:

Amen.

His expletis, et eis ad ordinem suum reversis, Pontifex, sedens cum mitra, et baculo, admonet eos; dicens:

Quia res, quam tractatúri estis, satis periculósa est, fílii dilectíssimi, móneo vos, ut diligénter totíus Missæ órdinem, atque Hóstiæ consecratiónem, ac fractiónem, et communiónem, ab áliis jam doctis Sacerdótibus discátis, priúsquam ad celebrándum Missam accedátis.

Pontifex surgit cum mitra, et baculo, et Presbyteris coram eo adhuc genuflexis benedicit, dicens voce competenti:

Benedictio Dei omnipoténtis Pa ✠ tris, et Fí ✠ lii, et Spíritus ✠ sancti descéndat super vos; ut sitis benedícti in órdine sacerdotáli; et offerátis placábiles hóstias pro peccátis, atque offensiónibus pópuli omnipoténti Deo, cui est honor, et glória per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. ℟. Amen.

Post hæc Pontifex, deposita mitra, et amoto faldistorio, convertitur ad altare, prosequitur Missam.

Sit nomen Dómini benedictum, etc.

* Episcopus eum osculatur in dextra vultus parte. S. R. C. 12 Nov. 1831.

Tum sedet, et alloquitur Ordinatos sub his verbis:

Fílii dilectíssimi, diligénter consideráte Ordinem per vos suscéptum, ac onus húmeris vestris impósitum; studéte sancte et religióse vívere, atque omnipoténti Deo placére, ut grátiam suam possítis acquírere, quam ipse vobis per suam misericórdiam concédere dignétur.

Sínguli ad primam Tonsúram, vel ad quátuor minóres Ordines promóti, dícite semel Psalmos pœnitentiáles, cum Litaníis, Versículis, et Oratiónibus. Ad Subdiaconátum, vel Diaconátum, Noctúrnum talis diéi.* Ad Presbyterátum vero ordináti, post primam vestram Missam, tres álias Missas vidélicet, unam de Spíritu sancto, áliam de beáta María semper Vírgine, tértiam pro Fidélibus défúnctis dícite, et omnipoténtem Deum étiam pro me oráte.

Quod illi devote suscipiunt, et respondent se facturos.

* Quod intelligendum est de nocturno feriali; si ordinatio fiat in Dominica de primo nocturno Dominicæ; vel de nocturno feriali, qui respondet illi diei in qua fit ordinatio. S. R. C. 11 Aug. 1860.

PRIESTHOOD

SACERDOS ALTER CHRISTUS

These words, gentlemen, give you an idea of the Priesthood; they sum up what the Pontifical says about this, your last ordination; they show you also how far beyond my capabilities it will be to describe to you this morning the wonderful love of Jesus for His priest. That is beyond the power of human speech; so I pray Our Divine Priest to speak to your heart, whilst his minister does his best to explain such mysteries.

Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament reaches the last stage of His sacrifice: the communion. After the immolation the victim is consumed by the people. And it is in this very state that Christ is the most complete model of the priest: *Sacerdos alter Christus.* What would be the most fitting inscription for the tabernacle? *Deus caritas est.* Jesus loves us, and so much does He love His priest that He makes him another Christ. This expresses in one word the dignity of the priest. The priest should love Jesus so as to become another Christ: this gives you an idea of the sacerdotal obligations.

Postulat Sancta Mater Ecclesia Catholica ut hos Diaconos ad onus presbyterii ordinetis. Why does the Church beg for your ordination? Because she is Catholic. Expansion and diffusion are her very essence, the result of her fecundity. For that she needs priests devoted to the salvation of souls. Christ, her spouse, has ascended

to Heaven; she needs other Christs. That is just what she is asking for. Christ has left to her a perpetual and visible sacrifice of which He is the Priest and the victim. But Christ, the divine victim is hidden under the species of bread and wine, and still Christ is the only priest who could offer it; Christ then will live on earth in the person of His priests. He will remain with us under the form of men. The condition of a priest will be, in a way, similar to that of bread and wine. To be but an appearance will be the glory of the priest. It is a glory for the bread and wine to be no longer a vulgar substance, but only its appearance, whilst Jesus is really present under the species; the priest's glory will consist in this that Jesus is in him living in him, acting under our human appearance: *Sacerdos alter Christus.*

This is what the Church asks from the Bishop, viz., that he would give her other Christs. She may ask from her priests to give every day the body and blood of Our Lord to her children; she cannot ask them for other Christs: the Bishop alone can perform such a wonder! *Ut hos Diaconos ad onus sacerdotii ordinetis.*

Never forget, gentlemen, that Holy Mother Church will ask for you that favour: as a return give to her all your love. Never forget that the Bishop must inquire: *Scis illos dignos esse,* and be sure to act in such a way that, on the day of your ordination, everybody, and your conscience also, be able to answer: *In quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.*

I. Dignity of the Priest

The Bishop having obtained the assent of the people who are so deeply interested in having only holy priests, instructs the candidates on the sacerdotal dignity. The priest is both the man of God and the man of souls. To him are entrusted the dearest interests of Our Lord and the eternal interests of souls: *Sacerdotem oportet offerre, benedicere, præesse, prædicare et baptizare.* The priests must have a heart of fire for God, a heart of flesh for souls;* *Geminæ dilectionis virtute fundatos.* This foundation is absolutely necessary for the work of the priest.

A. Man of God! The minister of sacrifice: *sacerdotem oportet offerre.* Here the Bishop says two words which would require years of meditation to be thoroughly understood: *Agnoscite quod agitis, imitamini quod tractatis.* Realize that you are another Christ, and try to be another Christ. Always the same idea, but so suggestive and so fruitful!

Agnoscite quod agitis. From childhood you have been taught what the priest is doing at the altar. Do you remember the curious questions you asked your mother, the first time she brought you to church, when perhaps she had no little trouble to keep you quiet, because you wanted to know somewhat too eagerly what the priest is

* "To live in the midst of the world without wishing its pleasures; to be a member of each family yet belonging to none; to share all sufferings; to penetrate all secrets; to heal all wounds; to go from men to God and offer Him their prayers; to return from God to man to bring pardon and hope; to have a heart of fire for charity and a heart of bronze for chastity; to teach and pardon, console and bless always; my God, what a life; and it is yours, O priest of Jesus Christ."—Lacordaire.

doing at the altar. This was the first time that through your loving mother, the Church told you as now: *Agnoscite quod agitis.* Did you not, perhaps, after having understood what the priest is doing at the altar, try also to do the same? Do you imagine, on the day of your ordination, when you will do it for good, how sweet such memories will be to your dear mother, and how she will see in that grace an ample reward for all the sacrifices she made for you?

Since then, how many times has this word been addressed to you again? at college, here, at spiritual reading, in the meditations, in your communications with your confessor; more strikingly, when gazing at the newly ordained priests ascending the altar for the first time; in fact every day, at Mass, or in the silent intimacy of your visits to the Blessed Sacrament! How often have you heard this word: *agnoscite quod agitis* realize what is done at the altar? And still, we do not ask ourselves this question often enough. You do not realize well enough that you will celebrate Mass just as you assist at Mass now—such is the teaching of experience—not a bit more fervently. Do you really think that you have reached the height of your ambition? Would you be satisfied to say Mass as you hear it now? *Agnoscite quod agitis.*

Our Lord was immolated on Calvary. He offers Himself again every morning at the altar by the hands of His priest. The sacrifice of the Mass is essentially the same as that of the Cross. What share has the priest in that sacrifice? Where does he find the victim? *Ubi est victima,* could he, like Isaac of old, ask when ascending the steps of the altar. Listen: *Hoc est corpus meum,*

says this priest bending over a small piece of bread.* What happens? *Agnoscite quod agitis:* The divine victim is present: *Ave verum corpus! "Hic est calix sanguinis mei,"* continues the priest: We adore the divine victim sacrificed to God: *Agnoscite quod agitis.*

The priest says: *Hoc est corpus meum*, even he has to say it for the validity of the consecration. *Meum!* But it is not he who says these words; his voice indeed we hear, but he is only the instrument of the Sovereign Priest: Our Lord speaks through his minister. The glory of this minister consists precisely in diasppearing, in allowing Jesus to act through his personality: *Sacerdos alter Christus.*

This Christ now immolated by the hands of the priest is the same Christ who is in Heaven. Same happiness, same power, same majesty. He is performing the same acts, offering the same adorations, the same thanksgiving, the same prayers. He the object of the beatitude of the elect is now in the hands of the priest: *Agnoscite quod agitis.*

But if really the priest causes Our Lord to be present on the altar, if he offers him, whilst Jesus is now in Heaven, have we not to conclude that it is from the very bosom of the Father that the priest draws this divine victim: *Agnoscite quod agitis.*

Now if you realize that, you will realize also that never will your conscience be pure enough, your faith strong

*"There was a swift glance up, as to the great sun that burned overhead, one more noiseless sign, and he sank forward in unutterable awe, with his arms on the altar and the white disc, hovering on the brink of non-existence, beneath his eyes."—R. H. BENSON, *The King's Achievement*, p. 314–315.

enough, your religion, humility and contrition perfect enough.

With Jesus the whole Church is offered on the altar, by the hands of the priest: *Sacerdotem oportet offerre.* And whilst with Jesus, our victim, the whole Church enters into the sentiments of a victim, can it be that the priest who represents the Church, who holds the victim in his hands would not be a victim! *Imitamini quod tractatis.* The priest evidently must be a victim with Jesus: *Sacerdos alter Christus.* This means that we have to humble and annihilate ourselves, so as to be reduced to the quality of instrument, and to allow Jesus to exercise a living influence upon our life.

Our sanctity should be higher than the sanctity of a religious, for we live in the world; we are exposed to the dangers of the world, we have not the helps of the religious life and however we must be a victim united with our beloved victim.

Our beloved victim said the night before the Passion, after the first ordination: *Pro eis ego sanctifico meipsum.* What does He mean, a real sanctification? The meaning is rather: *Sacrifico meipsum:* I offer myself in sacrifice. So the special character of our sanctity should be the sanctity of a victim. The more thoroughly we become victims, the more truly are we priests. *Sacerdotem oportet offerre, imitamini quod tractatis;* or, as Lacordaire expresses it in his eloquent language: "The sacerdotal state is the immolation of a man joined with the immolation of a God." But the great encouragement to such a difficult life is our privilege of immolating Our Lord every morning. *Imitamini quod tractatis, quatenus concupiscentias vestras mortificare procuretis.*

It is at the altar that we understand that other word of St. Paul: *Adimpleo ea quæ desunt passionum Christi pro corpore ejus quod est Ecclesia.* St. Paul implies thereby that the redeeming work of Christ considered in its entirety, is not completed in Himself but has to be "filled up" in His members, each one helping by his sufferings to apply the merits of the Redemption, first to himself, then to others. But a large number shrink from this suffering, increasing thereby the share of others. Heroic souls offer themselves as victims and by voluntary expiations, take upon themselves a lightening of the burden of atonement that weighs on humanity at large. What St. Paul did, the priest should do it also: *imitamini quod tractatis; sacerdotem oportet offerre.* He must not be prodigal of the blood of Christ, whilst sparing of his own.

B. Man of Souls. *Sacerdotem oportet benedicere, baptizare, prædicare et præesse!*

(*a*) *Benedicere.* To bless, according to the etymology, is to pronounce, to wish some favour to some person and more especially to invoke the favour of God upon a person. So it is the privilege of a father, of a mother, to bless their children; it is also the function of the priest. He has to bless the faithful, especially at Mass. When he offers the Holy Sacrifice to God, he gives, at the end, his blessing to the congregation. You will be told: *Sacerdotem oportet benedicere,* by people falling on their knees to receive your blessing. You have been witness of their eagerness, after an ordination, to get the blessing of the priests, and of the touching scenes which take place when a young priest gives his blessing to an aged father,

to his beloved mother! The Catholic religion alone offers such a spectacle.*

Another form of the ministry of blessing is the consolation that the priest must bring to those who suffer, who are afflicted. The priest should say with His divine Master: *Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam vos;* and his heart should be opened to all miseries, to all sufferings. We are not priests for ourselves, to save our soul: in fact there are more dangers in the priesthood than in any other situation. But we are priests for others, especially for those who suffer and are afflicted. This holy and supernatural compassion is perhaps the truest picture of the Heart of Jesus on earth, of this Christ who said to the poor mother at Naim: "Weep not, your son is not dead;" the Christ who knew how to mingle his tears with those of the sisters of Lazarus. Devotedness

*"The day of a first Communion is a golden day in a Christian's life; a Christian's wedding day is a day of both spiritual blessing and temporal happiness; the day of the religious profession of a young man or young woman is a day of the purest and most sacred joy; but the day of a young priest's ordination contains in itself all these joys in a far higher and more perfect form. And not only for himself, but for his parents and family also, it is indeed a day of unalloyed happiness. To have a son or a brother clothed in the very priesthood of Christ Himself; to see his hands anointed with holy oil, made able and fit to consecrate the very Body and Blood of Christ; to hear the power of the keys communicated to him in the very words of Christ to His apostles: to receive his first sacerdotal blessing; and a day or two later to assist at his first offering of the Divine Sacrifice and receive at His consecrated hands the Bread of Life in Holy Communion; here are privileges unique in their kind and transcending any merely earthly privileges, as the Christian priesthood transcends all earthly dignities."—Bishop Casartelli, *London Tablet*, May 7, 1910, p. 744.

to the poor, the lowly, the afflicted is entirely supernatural, because there is in it no attraction for our nature; and still it is also a consoling ministry, because it is very often the one which procures for the priest the most heartfelt expression of gratitude. Fruitful ministry, too, because a priest who is known as attending the poor, may ask any sacrifice from his people; his appeals are always answered. Who could say that he is not sincere?

(*b*) *Baptizare.* Baptism, nowadays, is given almost exclusively to children. The spirit which should animate the priest who fulfils this ministry is a great desire of the purification of souls. Hence with the word *baptizare* we may connect also the ministry of confessor, which requires the same spirit of zeal. Penance has been called "*Baptismus laboriosus.*" The sinners are certainly, among those who suffer, the most miserable and the most worthy of compassion. *Quod perierat requiram,* such is the motto of the true priest, of the saviour of souls. To love souls in order that we may redeem them and purify them, is to love them in a priestly way. We love our brother because we see in him the image of God disfigured, because we see in him a sinner, and we desire to please Our Saviour in helping Him to see once more the beauty of a converted soul. This is to love as the Heart of Jesus loves. This ardent longing, this burning desire to create still more purity, more sanctity, to conquer more souls for Jesus—this is true zeal. We feel bound to extend the merits of the Passion of Our Lord; and this need of expansion comes from one principle: love for Jesus. We love Him so much that we wish that every soul should love Him and show its love by its purity: *Sacerdotem oportet baptizare.*

(*c*) *Prædicare.* This office is absolutely essential to

the Church! She is constituted upon the basis of oral teaching. To enter it, faith is necessary; now faith comes by instruction: *Quomodo credent nisi audiant?* Scripture is indeed a divine book, but it is a dead letter, which has to be explained, and cannot exercise the action which the preacher can obtain! The great difficulty, as well as the most essential point is not to write a sermon, but to practice what we preach. I sum up in one word what I said about preaching, when speaking of the orders of lector and deacon: the life of a priest is a book—a book in two volumes, we might say: volume I. is what the priest preaches, volume II. what the priest does. Now it is but natural that the second volume should not be the contradiction of the first, it should be rather the continuation and the confirmation: *sacerdotem oportet prædicare.**

(*d*) *Præesse.* The priest must be a leader, walking the same path as the faithful—asking nothing which he does not himself do, but always ahead, as a leader. He preaches that the only way to go to Heaven is the way of the Cross: he must take this same way, but walk before

* "We daily lament the havoc caused by the enemy in the field given us to cultivate and the ill success of our efforts to pluck up the tares and enrich the soil with graces and blessings. But let us . . . . ask ourselves if we are such instruments as we should be in the hands of God to accomplish great things . . . . We are like books which contain the law, but do not observe it; or like guide-posts set up along the road to point the way to travellers without following it themselves. . . . . The guide-post has fulfilled its purpose by pointing out the way. This is all that was required of it. But we priests have another office. We are set in the midst of people to be their leaders and to make easy to men of good will the way that leads to heaven. If we do not help them to go there, we become an impediment to them and block their way."—MILLET-BYRNE, *Jesus Living in the Priest*, p. 50–51.

them. That the priest exercises some influence, you may judge from the painful sensation caused by the scandal given by a priest, when such a calamity happens; it would be otherwise, if he were an ordinary man. From history, you may learn what has been the influence of the priests in the past: *Gesta Dei per sacerdotes*, might be the fitting title of many a chapter of Church History either in France, in Ireland or America.

The priest cannot be a common man. Of necessity he belongs to an aristocracy—aristocracy of virtue, or an aristocracy of crime. If he is not the salt of the earth, he will be a source of corruption; if he is not the light of the world, he will remain a lighthouse indeed—but one in which the light has been quenched, and against which vessels will be wrecked in the darkness of the night. The priest must exercise a potent influence for good: *Sacerdotem oportet præesse*. Through the press he can exercise a strong influence; if it is possible at all he should make it a powerful instrument of zeal. In fine, the priest will exercise a deep influence by the superiority of his science, by the energy of his character, and more especially by the sublimity of his sanctity.

II. Sanctity of the Priest

I have spoken at length of the dignity of the priest; for, the sanctity of the priest, it may be said, is nothing else than a profound sentiment of his dignity.

The sanctity of the priest consists mostly in submitting himself to the influence of Our Lord, whilst his own personality is reduced, as it were, to an appearance. *Oportet Illum crescere, me autem minui.* Then, in his ministry to souls, the grace which overflows his own soul will become

powerful to sanctify others. *Sacerdos alter Christus.* But nothing, it seems to me, is better calculated to make him enter into these sentiments than the sentiment of his grandeur and of his dignity. Under the crushing weight of such honors he feels only that he is nothing. I can tell you, gentlemen, that such is actually the dominant feeling of a priest fresh from the ordination. Such also was my feeling when meditating on the words of the Pontifical concerning the priesthood, to prepare this commentary; and it seems very evident that such also has been the feeling of those who wrote the prayers and the instructions of this part of the *Ritus ordinationis.*

Look at a big oak tree under the ardent rays of the sun at noon, its shadow is very small. But when the sun is going down, even a small tree, a bush casts out, very far, a large, shapeless, ugly shadow. So it is with men. Under the brilliant sun of the morning of his ordination, with the clear view of his high dignity, the priest has only one tendency, one idea, one desire: to disappear. *Illum oportet crescere, me autem minui.* But when his fervor is fading away, when the vision of his dignity grows dim, then he becomes selfish, and the shadow of his egotism stretches far away, broad and unseemly. He forgets that he is more than a man. He forgets the *Sacerdos alter Christus.* His sanctity is weakened because he forgets his dignity, that dignity of which St. Gregory said: *Nullam ascensus et deificationis mensuram agnoscant.*

We have seen what the priesthood will give you. But then what cause will be adequate to such a result? For the creation of the sacerdotal being, what solemnity, what resources will the Church employ? . . . . The Bishop having completed his instruction, a deep silence

falls on the congregation, the candidates advance towards the altar. The incomparable moment has come, and the Bishop imposes his hands on the head of each one. *Nihil dicens*—says the rubric—*Nihil dicens*. Not a word! Then, with his right hand still extended, the Bishop simply and briefly asks for them of God the sacerdotal grace, and . . . . they are priests forever.*

Nothing seems to me more impressive than this sublime simplicity. The Bishop imposes his hands, without a word, a short prayer follows; and this wonderful prodigy, viz., the creation of a priest, is accomplished. God alone can do such grand work with nothing. There is no word to express such divine operations. The sovereign Priest has taken possession of these young men. They are priests. *Sacerdos alter Christus. Tu es Sacerdos in æternum.*

Meanwhile, and before the Bishop has uttered the prayer which consecrates these candidates priests for ever, all the priests who attend the ordination come to lay hands on the heads of their young brothers; some still fresh from ordination, others aged and bent by a life of hard work. Of course, this ceremony has nothing to do with

* "Secunda sententia docet cum *Habert, S. Ligorio*, etc., materiam in sola *manuum impositione* sitam esse. Forma autem est oratio *Exaudi*, cum sequenti prefatione, addit Lehmkuhl."—TANQUEREY, *De ordine*, p. 39.

"Communior jam evasit sententia quæ in sola manuum impositione et oratione sitam esse materiam et formam horum ordinum tuetur" inquit *Perrone*. Sane pro hac sententia faciunt Scripturarum testimonia, ritualia et Sacramentaria ante 900 ad minimum annos conscripta, aliaque antiquitatis monumenta in quibus solius impositionis manuum fit mentio . . . . *Concilium Trid.* (Sess. 14, C. III, de ext. unct.) *sacerdotes ordinatos per impositionem manuum dicit.*"—HURTER, III, n. 711.

the conferring of the order. It is only a prayer, a communion. These priests express in that symbolic way that they wish to call upon the ordinands graces and blessings. They have had some experience of the ministry. They know the difficulties of the apostolate. They wish they could communicate something of their experience, and receive in exchange some fresh ardor and burning zeal.

The ordinands rise . . . . priests for eternity. The second part of their life begins. The preparation is over now. The apostolate, the conquests of souls, the entire gift of themselves—this is what they have to do, until their death. Heaven and earth may rejoice.

Eluceat in eis totius forma justitiæ, says the Bishop. That means really all the virtues. Then he gives the priestly vestments.

1. *The stole. Accipe jugum Domini,* and he shifts it and crosses it on the breast, the token of Christ's yoke. However it is to be remembered that the yoke of the Lord is sweet. *Jugum meum suave est.* This is absolutely true and how appropriate, just when this young priest feels crushed down under the weight of his grandeur and powers. He can do only one thing, then: to submit, to surrender, to give himself up and pray that he be a holy priest.

2. *Accipe vestem sacerdotalem.* This is the chasuble, which in its primitive form covered the priest entirely; its symbolism tells the characteristic feature of the priestly life, *per quam charitas intelligitur.* Charity is everything in a priest. This we should expect: *Sacerdos alter Christus.* Now, what is Our Lord? *Deus Charitas est.* And he said Himself: Behold this heart which has loved men so

much. The priest should be like his Master and every time he puts on his chasuble, he should remember the word of his ordination: *vestem sacerdotalem per quam charitas intelligitur.*

Every day he uses it, to say Mass. Then especially an ardent charity is required of him. The priest must have a great love for souls and a great love for Jesus, when ascending the altar. A saintly bishop used to say that the altar is burning with the flames of the Sacred Heart. If the priest has not in his heart this ardent love, the sudden transition from the altar to his cold ordinary dispositions is apt to produce a dangerous moral pneumonia. Beware. *Accipe vestem sacerdotalem per quam charitas intelligitur.* This symbolism should not be a lie.

Whilst the young priests, clad in their new vestments, meditate upon what Our Lord has done for them, the Bishop offers up to God a prayer, the most salient idea of which is: *Ut donum sui ministerii purum et immaculatum custodiant.* They have received such magnificent gifts! now the chief point is to preserve them. *Purum et immaculatum ministerii sui donum custodiant.* The greatest danger of all is perhaps discouragement. Discouragement is a composite feeling made up of all our weaknesses, and magnified by all external difficulties and temptations. Truly a great danger is it for a priest if, some years after his ordination, he comes to this conclusion: All my efforts are vain. I am the victim of an illusion. I thought I could keep the resolutions I made before leaving the seminary. But it is not practical. I cannot maintain the piety I deemed necessary, I cannot think of making my meditation every morning. After all, what is the use? There are so many who neglect it.

And, little by little, this priestly heart is completely changed. May God preserve you all from such a danger! *Purum ac immaculatum ministerii sui donum custodiant!* To this end, one of the practical means suggested by the Bishop is an assiduous and systematic study of the Epistles of St. Paul—so dear to you, since the day of your subdeaconship—*Instituti doctrinis quas Tito et Timotheo Paulus exposuit, quod legerint imitentur.* If every day you devote some time to this study, you will be faithful, you will preserve the gift of your priesthood, and you will acquire influence and power as a teacher of the Gospel.

How is it that, when all seems to be over, the Bishop intones the *Veni Creator? Creator!* Is there any creation to be done? Many theologians (although not so rightly, to my mind) have thought that, in part, the order was conferred by the ceremony which is just about to take place, the consecration of the hands with the holy oil, *quæcumque consecraverint consecrentur, quæcumque benedixerint benedicantur et sanctificentur.*

Then the priest touches the chalice containing wine, and the paten upon which is placed the host, receiving thereby the power of offering the holy sacrifice. *Accipe potestatem offerendi sacrificium tam pro vivis, quam pro defunctis.** Fittingly, indeed, is the sublime Veni Creator sung at this juncture. *Accende lumen sensibus*, so that I may see, that I may bring home to myself what I am doing. *Agnoscite quod agitis;* that I may realize what this chalice will be to me. *Infunde amorem cordibus,*

* Read the touching description of an ordination in the chapter *Sacerdos in æternum* from the admirable book of MONSIGNOR BENSON, *The King's Achievement*, quoted above.

infirma nostri corporis virtute firmans perpeti, so that I may celebrate in a worthy manner, and imitate the Holy Victim. *Imitamini quod tractatis.* The holy sacrifice begun by the Bishop alone, who has now conferred all the orders, is far from being over. We have reached the offertory. Immediately the new priests join him; and with him, they really consecrate and offer the divine victim. They actually say their first Mass. Why? Because they are priests; and as the sacrificial function is the essential function of the priest, they should wait no longer. They are priests; hence they must immediately perform a priestly function, the highest of all. They pronounce with a complete efficacy those five words—*Hoc est enim corpus meum*—and the Son of God descends on the altar, as he descended into the Womb of the Blessed Virgin when she pronounced those five words of humility: *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. Descendit de cælis, et incarnatus est. Et homo factus est.* Oh! how right was St. Austin when he said: *O vere veneranda sacerdotum dignitas, in quorum manibus, velut in utero Virginis Mariæ, Verbum Dei incarnatur!* The priests continue: *Hic est calix sanguinis mei.* And when they contemplate the chalice filled with the blood of Our Lord, then they realize that truly the Lord is the portion of their chalice. They remember the chalice of their subdeaconship, and surely do they believe, do they feel, that this golden chalice contains an ample compensation for all the sacrifices of their seminary life, because the Lord was mindful indeed of every drop of blood they have shed into the empty chalice of their subdiaconate; they possess now the sacred blood of their divine Master and Friend. *Memor sit Dominus omnis sacrificii tui!*

Friend, this is the right word, for behold the Bishop interrupts the Mass, after the Communion, and addresses to the priests these words of Our Lord: *Jam non dicam vos servos, vos autem dixi amicos.* This title certainly sums up all the great mysteries which have been just accomplished. *Amicitia aut pares invenit aut facit.* Has not the divine friendship accomplished this wonderful transformation: *Pares facit! Sacerdos alter Christus!* These new priests could easily tell when their parents, when their friends began to love them. But when did Jesus, who now calls them his friends, begin to love them? *In caritate perpetua dilexi te, ideo attraxi te.* They are lost in that abyss of love, and they wonder how it is possible that Our Blessed Saviour could pronounce such words. *Jam non dicam vos servos, vos autem dixi amicos.*

The Bishop requests them, before receiving the power of remitting sins, to make a public confession of faith. They recite the *Credo.* They believe indeed. But their most emphatic belief is certainly the belief expressed by St. John. *Et nos credidimus caritati.* We believe that God has loved us in creating us, in giving us Jesus, the son of Mary, as a Redeemer. We believe He loved us in dying for us, this Jesus whom we have just offered as a victim of expiation. We believe that, through love, He instituted the Church, who entrusts us now with the administration of the divine Sacraments, and, thereby, with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost and his gifts. We believe that His love, through which our sins are forgiven, wishes to see us all in Heaven, to love us for all eternity. Our sacerdotal vestment—*per quam caritas intelligitur*—will tell us for ever of that love. *Et nos credidimus caritati!*

Once more they receive the Holy Ghost. *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum; quorum remiseris peccata remittuntur eis.* If Our Lord came down to a confessional, he would say to the penitents: *Ego te absolvo.* The priest says: *Ego te absolvo.* Why? Always the same reason. *Sacerdos alter Christus.**

And the Bishop adds: *Stola innocentiæ induat te Dominus!* The priest shall have to answer at the judgment-seat of God for all the absolutions he will have given. He needs to be so pure! *Stola innocentiæ induat te Dominus.* But above all he needs an immense charity: this is why the Bishop unfolds now entirely the chasuble, *per quam caritas intelligitur.*

Then the newly ordained priest promises obedience to his Bishop, and recites the Gospel of St. John. *In principio erat Verbum . . . . et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis, et vidimus gloriam ejus.* Never had this young priest fathomed so deeply the abyss of love contained in that page. Never had he understood before the depths of gratitude hidden in the *Magnificat,* which he now sings so fervently in union with Mary. *Beatam me dicent omnes generationes quia fecit magna qui potens est.* No wonder!

Qui de Virgine natus.
Per nos sæpe renasceris.

Here I bring to a close this commentary on the Pontifical. I wish to thank you most heartily, gentlemen, for having given me an occasion of going again over those delightful phases of our ordinations, since the first engage-

* See MILLET-BYRNE, *op. cit.*, p. 20–25.

ment made by the cleric to his beloved Jesus, then through the four successive ascensions of the minor orders, a progressive preparation for the priestly life. We reached afterwards the virginal immolation, the bloody nuptials of subdeaconship, then we saw the victim transformed by the Holy Ghost, and preparing by love and fortitude, to become the victim given in communion, dedicated to Jesus living in the souls. Finally we were allowed a glimpse of the dazzling splendors of our priesthood.

In these imperfect words, I have told you what I know of our priesthood; still I fear more than ever—in fact, I am positively sure, that I have not done justice to the subject. *De quo nobis grandis sermo et ininterpretabilis ad dicendum!* But this fear prompts me to ask you two favours. The first is that you meditate often on the Pontifical and the life of our Lord. In these two books you will find the true ideal of our priesthood. This will revive the fervour of your ordinations; and the Holy Ghost will teach you what you have not been told during this short week. The second is that you allow me to borrow the last word said by the Bishop to those whom he has just ordained: *Et etiam pro me orate.* You will pray so well during these days! Pray that the second volume of my priestly life may be the continuation, not the contradiction, of the first one. Ask Our Lord to deign to increase in the heart of his priests the flame of their sacred ordination, so that, after having consecrated to you all our strength, all our energies, our whole life, in order to make the priesthood of Our Lord better understood and appreciated, you and I may together contemplate and admire, and love and praise, and enjoy forever the love of Our Sovereign Priest and beloved Friend, Jesus Christ. Amen.

In order that both the readers and the writer should endeavor to practice what has been said in the preceding conferences, it was deemed most expedient to reproduce the incomparable exhortation sent by our Most Holy Father Pius X to the Catholic clergy on the occasion of the fiftieth year of his priesthood.

EXHORTATION TO THE CATHOLIC CLERGY OF OUR MOST HOLY LORD, PIUS X, BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE POPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF HIS PRIESTHOOD, PIUS X POPE

Beloved Sons, Health and Apostolic Blessing:

Deeply impressed on our soul and full of warning are those words of the Apostle of the Gentiles to the Hebrews when, admonishing them of their duty of obedience to their superiors, he solemnly affirmed: "For they watch as being to render an account of your souls" (XIII, 17). But if this truth applies to all who rule in the Church, it falls in a special way on Us, who, unworthy as We are, have from God the supreme authority in it. Hence, We are night and day

full of solicitude, nor do We ever cease meditating upon and working for whatever may tend to the salvation and increase of the Lord's flock. But there is one subject that mainly occupies Us: that those in sacred orders should be completely what their state requires them to be. For We are convinced that it is principally on this that the present welfare and the future hopes of religion depend. It was on this account that immediately on entering upon the pontificate, although taking the clergy as a whole, We found many reasons for praise, We yet deemed it well to exhort most earnestly Our Venerable Brothers, the Bishops of the whole Catholic world, constantly to bend all their energy to the task of forming Christ in those who are destined in virtue of their office to form Christ in others. We know well the good will shown by the sacred Prelates in this matter; We know with what foresight and diligence they strive assiduously to lead the clergy to virtue; and for this We wish not so much to praise them as to give them this public expression of Our thanks.

But while We are glad that as a result of the work of the Bishops many of the clergy have been imbued with a heavenly ardor, reviving or intensifying in them the grace they received with the laying-on of hands at their ordination to the priesthood, there is still ground for complaint that some others in different countries do not so approve themselves that the faithful looking on them may see in them as in a mirror an example for them to imitate, as should be the case. To such as these We wish in this letter to open Our heart, as the heart of a father beating with anxious love at the sight of a sick son. Impelled by this love, therefore, We add Our exhortations to the exhortations of the Bishops premising that, while they are designed principally to bring back the erring and to rouse the slothful to a better life, they may serve also as a stimulus to the others. We point out the way in which each one may more earnestly strive every day to be in truth what the Apostle has admirably described as a "man of God" (I Tim. VI, 11) and answer to the just expectation of the Church.

Nothing that We shall say will be entirely unfamiliar to you or new to anybody, but it will be something that should certainly be remembered by all, and God gives Us the hope that Our words will

not be without abundant fruit. What We earnestly beg is: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth" (Ephes. IV, 23, 24), and this will be the most beautiful and acceptable gift you can offer Us on the occasion of the fiftieth year of Our priesthood. And while We, "in a contrite heart and in the spirit of humility" (Dan. III, 39) go over with God the years We have passed in the priesthood, We shall seem in a manner to expiate the human shortcomings in them that are to be lamented, admonishing you and exhorting you, "that you may walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing" (Coloss. I, 10).

And in this appeal We shall be consulting not merely your own interests, but that of all the Catholic people, for your interests cannot be separated from theirs. In truth it is not possible for a priest to be good or bad for himself alone, for the character and life of a priest cannot but have its deep influence on the people. When a priest is good what a great blessing it is for his surroundings!

Hence, beloved sons, We begin Our exhortation by stimulating you to that holiness of life which the dignity of your rank demands of you.

For the priest is not priest for himself alone, but for others: "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God" (Hebr. V, 1). Christ Himself pointed out this truth when He explained the end for which the priest's work is destined by comparing them with salt and light. The priest is the light of the world, the salt of the earth, and it must be clear to all that he is this by proclaiming the truth of Christianity. But is it not equally clear that the priesthood will be of but little use if the priest does not prove by his conduct what he preaches in words? His hearers, contumeliously indeed, but not without reason, will object: "They profess that they know God but in their works they deny Him" (Titus, I, 16); they will reject the teaching and fail to profit by the light of the priest. Hence Christ Himself, as the model of priests, taught first by His example, then by His words: "Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts, I, 1).

So, too, if the sanctity is neglected, the priest cannot be in any way the salt of the earth; for what is itself corrupt and contaminated

is quite unfitted for preserving soundness, and when sanctity is lacking corruption cannot but be present. Wherefore, Christ, dwelling on the same comparison, calls such priests salt without savor, "good for nothing any more but to be cast out," and therefore "to be trodden on by men" (Matt. V. 13).

All this becomes still more clear when it is remembered that we do not exercise the office of the priesthood in our own name but in that of Jesus Christ. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. IV, 1); "for Christ therefore we are ambassadors" (II Cor. V, 20).

It was on this account, too, that Christ numbered us not among His servants but among His friends: "I will not now call you servants. . . . . But I have called you friends; because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father I have made known to you. . . . . I have chosen you and appointed you, that you may go and bear fruit" (John XV, 15, 16).

It is for us, therefore, to represent Christ, and the embassy conferred by Him is to be so carried out that we may attain His aims. And since the highest sign of friendship is to love and reject the same things as the friend, we are bound, as friends, to feel within us what also Christ Jesus, who is "holy, innocent, undefiled" (Hebr. VII, 28); so that as His legatees we must win the faith of men to His teachings and His law, by observing them first ourselves; that as partakers of His power in freeing souls from the bonds of sin, we must strive with all our strength not to be involved in sin ourselves. But most of all as His ministers in the most august sacrifice, which is renewed with perennial virtue for the life of the world, we must be filled with the spirit with which He offered Himself to God, an immaculate victim, on the altar of the cross. For if so much sanctity was required of the priests of old, when the sacrifice was but a figure and a symbol, what is to be expected of us when the victim is Christ Himself? "Can anything be purer than he should be who eats of this great sacrifice? Can sun-beam be brighter than the hand should be which apportions this flesh?—the lips that are touched by spiritual fire?—the tongue that is empurpled by that Blood, most awe-inspiring?"*

* St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 82 on St. Matthew*, n. 5.

Very aptly St. Charles Borromeo in his addresses to the clergy insisted: "If we remembered, beloved brethren, what great and holy things the Lord God has placed in our hands, what force this thought would have in impelling us to lead lives worthy of ecclesiastics! What is it that the Lord has not put in my hands, when He has put in them His Only-Begotten Son, co-eternal and co-equal with Himself? In my hands He has put all His treasures, sacraments, and graces; He has put the souls than which nothing is dearer to Him, which in His love He preferred to Himself, which He redeemed with His blood; in my hands He has placed heaven, which I can open and close to others. . . . . How, therefore, can I ever be so ungrateful for such bounty and love as to sin against Him? as to offend His honor? as to soil this body which is His? as to stain this dignity, this life, consecrated to His service?"

This holiness of life, of which it will be well to treat at length, the Church seeks to promote with great and constant solicitude. To this end her sacred Seminaries have been instituted, where if the youths who grow up in the hope of entering the ranks of the clergy should be instructed in letters and knowledge, they are at the same time, and principally, to be formed in all piety from their tender years. When she gradually and at long intervals promotes the candidates for orders, like a good mother, she never spares her exhortations on the necessity of sanctity. It is sweet to recall here these exhortations. When she first chose us for the sacred army, she willed that we should duly profess: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; it is thou that wilt restore my inheritance to me" (Ps. XV, 5), by which words, says Jerome, the cleric is admonished "that as he is the portion of the Lord or has the Lord for his portion, so he should show himself as possessing the Lord and being possessed by the Lord."*

How solemnly she addresses those about to be numbered among the subdeacons! "Again and again you should consider attentively the burden that you freely desire today: . . . . but if you take this order, it will be no longer lawful for you to withdraw from your determination . . . . but you must serve God perpetually and with the help of His grace observe chastity." And finally:

* Epist. 52, n. 5.

"If hitherto you have been remiss at church, now you must be assiduous, if hitherto somnolent now vigilant, if hitherto unclean now chaste; . . . . Remember whose ministry it is that is given to you!"

For those about to be advanced to the diaconate the Bishop beseeches from God: "That all virtue may abound in them, modest authority, constant modesty, the purity of innocence and the observance of spiritual discipline. Let thy precepts shine forth in their conduct, that the people may acquire holy imitation from the example of their chastity."

But far more severe is the admonition addressed to those about to be initiated in the priesthood: "With great fear is such a step to be made, and care is to be taken that heavenly wisdom, upright conduct, and long observance of justice commend those who are chosen to make it. . . . . Let the odor of your life be the delight of the Church of Christ that by your preaching and example you may build up the house, that is, the family of God." And most impressive of all is that most solemn addition: "Conform your lives to the mysteries you perform," which agrees perfectly with the precept of Paul: "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. I, 28).

Such being the mind of the Church on the life of priests, nobody will be surprised to find that all the holy Fathers and Doctors with one accord speak on this subject in a manner that might to some appear to be extreme; but if we weigh their words carefully, we shall agree that they teach nothing but what is most true and correct. Their opinion may be summed up thus: Between the priest and an ordinary upright man there should be as much difference as there is between heaven and earth, and for this reason priestly virtue must shun not only graver sins but even the slightest. The Council of Trent held by the judgment of those venerable men when it admonished clerics to avoid "even light faults as being in them most serious"* most serious, that is, not in themselves but by reason of the person who commits them, of whom with better right than of material temples it may be said: "Holiness becomes Thy house" (Ps. XCII, 5).

* Sess. XXII, de reform., c. i.

And now let us see in what consists this sanctity which should not be lacking in the priest, for if a man is ignorant of this or misunderstands it he is certainly in great danger. For there are those who think, nay even proclaim aloud, that the merit of a priest should consist in the fact that he is entirely occupied in working for others, so that paying but little heed to the virtues by which a man is perfected himself (and which they thus call *passive* virtues) they proclaim that all a man's strength and zeal should be put forth in fostering and exercising the *active* virtues. This teaching is utterly fallacious and pernicious. Concerning it Our Predecessor of happy memory in his wisdom thus pronounced:*

"The one who would have Christian virtues to be adapted, some to one age and others to another, has forgotten the words of the Apostle: 'Whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made comfortable to the image of His Son' (Rom. VIII, 29). The Master and exemplar of all sanctity is Christ, to whose rule all must conform who wish to attain to the thrones of the blessed. Now, then, Christ does not at all change with the progress of the ages, but is 'yesterday and today, and the same forever' (Hebr. XIII, 8). To the men of all ages, the phrase is to be applied: 'Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart' (Matt. XI, 29), and at all times Christ shows Himself to us as 'being obedient unto death' (Phil. II, 8), and in every age also the word of the Apostle holds: 'They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences' (Gal. V, 24)."

And these teachings, while applying to every one of the faithful, refer more especially to priests, who should also, above others, take to themselves what Our Predecessor with Apostolic zeal proceeds to add: Would that many more would now cultivate those virtues, as did the holy men of bygone times, who by humbleness of spirit, by obedience and abstinence, were *powerful in word and work*, to the greatest advantage not only of religion but of the State and society." Here it is well to observe that the most prudent Pontiff rightly makes special mention of abstinence which in the language of the gospel we call self-denial. Truly, beloved sons, in this virtue is contained

* "Testem benevolentiæ." Letter to the Archbishop of Baltimore, January 22, 1899.

the strength and the force of all the fruit of the sacerdotal office; this neglected, the way is opened for everything that is capable of offending the eyes and souls of the people in the life of a priest. For if a man works for filthy lucre, if he mixes himself with the affairs of the world, if he seeks after the first places and despises the others, if he yields to flesh and blood, if he strives to please men, if he puts his trust in the plausible words of human wisdom—all this happens because he neglects the commandment of Christ and rejects the condition laid down by Him: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself" (Matt. XV, 24).

But while We inculcate this truth so strongly, We none the less admonish the priest that not for himself alone is he to live a holy life, for he is the laborer whom Christ "went out to hire into His vineyard" (Matt. XX, 1). It is for him, therefore, to pluck up hurtful plants, to sow useful ones, to water the ground, to watch lest the enemy sow tares. Hence the priest must take care not to be led, by a species of misguided zeal for his own private perfection, to omit any part of his office for the good of others, such as preaching the word of God, hearing confessions properly, assisting the sick, especially when they are near death, instructing those who are ignorant of their faith, consoling those in affliction, bringing back the erring, in all things, imitating Christ "who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil" (Acts X, 38). But in all these works let the important warning of the Apostle be carefully remembered: "Neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (I Cor. III, 7). For men may, going forth and weeping, sow their seed, and they may nourish it with much labor, but it belongs to God alone and to His most powerful help to make the seed germinate and bring forth the desired fruit. Besides, this must be well considered that men are nothing more than instruments which God uses for the salvation of souls, and therefore that it is required of them that they should be fit to be handled by God. How shall they become so? Do we think that God is moved by any natural or acquired excellence of ours to use our assistance for the increase of His glory? By no means; for it is written: "The foolish things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the strong, and

the base things of the world and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and things that are not that He might bring to naught things that are" (I Cor. I, 27, 28). One thing alone joins man with God, makes him pleasing and a not unworthy minister of His mercy: holiness of life and conduct. If this, which is indeed the supereminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, be lacking in a priest, all things are lacking. For disjoined from this, even the abundance of acquired knowledge (which We Ourselves are seeking to promote among the clergy), and dexterity and skill in work, although they may prove of some profit to the Church or to individuals, are frequently a lamentable cause of loss to them. But how many wonderfully salutary works for the people of God can be undertaken and accomplished by the man, however lowly, who is adorned with and rich in sanctity, is shown by numerous examples in all ages, and very brilliantly by one of recent date, that model pastor of souls, John Baptist Vianney, whom We are glad to have raised to the honors of the Blessed in Heaven. Sanctity alone makes us what our divine vocation requires us to be: men crucified to the world, and for whom the world itself is crucified; men walking in newness of life, who, as Paul admonishes, should show themselves as the ministers of God "in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned in the word of truth" (II Cor. VI, 5, ff.); whose thoughts are fixed only on heavenly things, and who strive by all means to lead others thither.

But since, as all are aware, sanctity of life is the fruit of our will, only in as far as our will is strengthened by the help of Divine grace, God Himself makes abundant provision that we may never, if we so wish, be destitute of grace; and this we acquire chiefly by the practice of prayer. Truly between prayer and sanctity the connection is so close that one cannot exist without the other. Wherefore the words of Chrysostom are quite in accord with the truth when he said: "I think it must be plain to all that it is simply impossible to live virtuously without the help of prayer,"* while Augustine acutely concludes that "he truly knows how to live rightly who knows how to pray rightly"† But Christ Himself brings

*On prayer, Sermon i.
†Fourth Homily.

these truths home to us still more forcibly, by His frequent exhortations and most of all by His example. In order to pray He was wont to retire into desert places or to go up in the mountains alone; He used to spend whole nights in prayer; He frequently went into the temple; nay, even when the crowds pressed around Him, He used to pray openly with His eyes raised to heaven; and at the end, when nailed to the cross, amid the pains of death, He implored the Father with a loud cry and with tears. Let us therefore hold this as absolutely certain that a priest, to maintain worthily his dignity and his office, must be devoted in a singular manner to the practice of prayer. Too often it is to be lamented that he applies himself to it rather from custom than from devotion when he recites the office negligently or hurries through a few prayers at stated hours, and for the rest of the day never thinks of addressing God, or piously turning his mind upwards. Yet the priest should obey much more diligently than others the command of Christ: "We ought always to pray" (Luke XVIII, 1), and hence Paul was so earnest in urging: "Be instant in prayer, watching in it in thanksgiving" (Coloss., IV, 2); "pray without ceasing" (I Thess., V, 17). For to the soul that is desirous of its own sanctity as well as of the salvation of others, how many occasions are given every day for turning to God! Inward troubles, the strength and obstinacy of temptations, lack of virtues, remissness in labor and the sterility of it, frequent offences and negligences, the fear of the divine judgments—all these are powerful incentives to us to weep before the Lord and thus, in addition to receiving the aid we seek, to become easily rich in merits. Nor is it for ourselves alone that we should weep. Amid the deluge of iniquity which is spreading on all sides, it is for us especially to implore and beseech the Divine mercy, for us to entreat Christ so benignly lavish of all grace in the wonderful Sacrament: "Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people."

On this head it is of the first importance that a certain time should be allotted every day for meditation on the things of eternity. No priest can omit this without being guilty of serious negligence and to the detriment of his soul. Writing to Eugene III, formerly his pupil but at the time Roman Pontiff, the most holy Abbot Bernard, frankly and urgently admonished him never to omit his daily meditation on divine things, on any pretext of the many and great cares

that accompany the supreme apostolate. He contended that he was justified in this, thus enumerating most prudently the advantages of the practice: "Meditation purifies the source, that is, the mind, from which it springs. Then it governs the affections, directs the acts, corrects the excesses, regulates the conduct, brings purity and order into the life of him who practices it; finally it confers knowledge both of human and divine things. Meditation separates what is confused, brings together what is divided, collects what is scattered, reveals what is hidden, investigates what is the truth, examines what is probable, discovers what is false and fictitious. Meditation ordains what is to be done, reflects on what has been performed, so that nothing remains in the mind either incorrect or needing to be corrected. In prosperity it anticipates coming adversity, in adversity it is, as it were, without feeling, and of these the latter is the fruit of fortitude, the former of prudence"* This summary of the great advantages which meditation is designed to secure for us, also teaches and admonishes us not only how salutary it is in every way, but how very necessary.

For august and venerable as are the various offices of the priesthood it happens from frequent use that those who have to perform them do not treat them with the proper reverence. Hence, the soul gradually losing its fervor, the way to carelessness is made easy, with consequent distaste for the most sacred things. Then again, the priest is obliged to be in daily intercourse, as it were, in the midst of a wicked people, so that frequently even in the very performance of his work of pastoral charity he has reason to fear the secret wiles of the serpent. And are not even religious hearts prone to be soiled by the dust of the world? It is apparent, then, that there exists a great and urgent necessity to return daily to the contemplation of eternal things that the mind and the will, deriving fresh strength therefrom, may be fortified against all allurements. Moreover, it behooves a priest to be possessed of a certain facility of rising to and dwelling on heavenly things; for it his duty to relish, to declare, to persuade heavenly things, and so to order his life above human affairs that whatever he does in the fulfilment of his sacred office he may do it according to God under the instinct

* *De Consid.* I, 7.

and the guidance of faith. Now this habit of mind, and this, as it were, native union with God is chiefly produced and protected by a practice of daily meditation—a truth which must be so plain to every thoughtful man that it is unnecessary to dwell longer on it.

A confirmation, albeit a painful one, of all this is to be found in the lives of those priests who think little of meditation on divine things or really dislike it. For they are men in whom the sense of Christ, that most estimable gift, languishes; entirely occupied with earthly things, following vanity, babbling of trifles, performing their sacred duties negligently, coldly, perhaps even unworthily! Formerly, when the chrism of the priestly unction was fresh upon them, they used to prepare their souls diligently for the office, to seek out the most favorable time and place, far from the din of the world, to endeavor to penetrate the sense of the divine words, to praise, and weep, and exult, to pour out their spirit with the Psalmist. But now how changed are they from of old! In like manner hardly a trace is left in them of their former ardent devotion towards the divine mysteries. How pleasant were those tabernacles in the days gone by! The heart rejoiced to be present at the table of the Lord, and to call others and still others thither! What purity before the sacrifice, what prayers issued forth from the desiring soul! and during its progress how great was the reverence, how perfectly the august ceremonies were performed in all their beauty, what heartfelt thanksgiving, and how happily the good odor of Christ went out among the people! "Call to mind, We beseech you, beloved sons, call to mind the former days" (Hebr., X, 32); for then the soul was aglow, fed as it was on holy meditation.

Among those who are loath or who neglect "to consider in their hearts" (Jer. XII, 11) there are some who do not hide their consequent poverty of soul, but rather excuse it on the plea that they are entirely given up to the bustle of ministerial life for the manifold utility of others. But they are miserably deluded. For when priests, not accustomed to converse with God, speak of Him to others, or give counsel on the Christian life, they are utterly destitute of the divine impulse and their preaching of the gospel seems to be, as it were, half dead. Their voice, be it ever so rich in prudence and eloquence, bears no resemblance to the voice of the Good Shepherd which the sheep listen to for their salvation; it makes a

noise and flows away emptily, and sometimes it is fruitful in bad example, to the shame of religion and the offence of the good. So is it also with other parts of the busy life; they are either altogether without result, or the results are fleeting through lack of that heavenly dew which "the prayer of him that humbleth himself" (Ecclus. XXXV, 2) calls forth so abundantly.

And here We cannot but bitterly lament the conduct of those who, taken up with pestiferous novelties, are not afraid to contradict all this, and who consider the time spent in meditation and prayer as lost! O fatal blindness! Would that such considered the subject rightly within themselves and recognized at last how this neglect of, and contempt for prayer ends! From it have sprung pride and contumacy producing those bitter fruits which Our paternal heart recoils to think of and ardently wishes to see wither away. May God grant the wish, and looking down in His kindness on the erring, pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of prayer in such abundance that they may bewail their error, and to the joy of all return to the paths they have so unfortunately abandoned, and for the future walk in them with more circumspection. And so may God be Our witness, as of old for the Apostle, how We "long after them all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" (Phil. I, 8).

For them and for all of you, beloved sons, let this exhortation of Ours, which is that of Christ the Lord, take deep root: "Take ye heed, watch and pray" (Mark XIII, 33). But especially in the practice of pious meditation let the efforts of all be engaged, let the soul win confidence from frequent repetition of the words: "Lord, teach us how to pray" (Luke XI, 1). There is one special reason which should have much weight in urging us to practice meditation· the wealth of counsel and virtue derived therefrom for that most difficult of all tasks, the proper care of souls. St. Charles in one of his pastorals dwells on this in a manner worthy of being remembered: "Understand, brethren, that nothing is so necessary for all ecclesiastics as mental prayer, preceding, accompanying and following all our actions. 'I will sing and I will understand,' says the Prophet (Ps. C, 2). If you administer the sacraments, O brother, meditate on what you are doing; if you celebrate Mass, meditate on what you are offering; if you are reciting the psalms, meditate to whom and what you are speaking; if you are engaged in the care of souls,

meditate by whose blood they have been washed.'"* Hence it is that the Church rightly commands us to repeat frequently those words of David: "Blessed is the man who meditates on the law of the Lord; his will shall remain by night and by day; all things that he shall do shall prosper." Finally there remains one noble incentive worth all the others. For if the priest is called another Christ, and is so by reason of the communication of authority, should he not entirely become so, and be held as such, also by reason of his imitation of the actions of Christ? . . . . Let our chief care, therefore, be to meditate on the life of Christ."†

With the daily contemplation of divine things it is of great importance that the priest should unite the assiduous reading of pious books, especially those that are divinely inspired. Thus Paul commanded Timothy: "Attend unto reading" (I Tim., IV, 13). So also Jerome, training Nepotian in the priestly life, inculcated: "Let sacred reading be never out of your hands," and he proceeds to give a reason for his advice: "Learn what you are to teach, attain that faithful speech which is according to knowledge, that you may be able to exhort in sound teaching, and put to silence those that contradict."‡ What great profit from this exercise for the priests who practice it constantly, how full of savor is their preaching of Christ, and how forcibly the minds and hearts of their hearers, instead of being soothed and petted, are drawn to better things and raised to heavenly desires! But for another reason, and one, beloved sons, greatly profitable to you, should the counsel of Jerome be taken to heart: "Let sacred reading be never out of your hands." For who does not know of the great influence exercised over the mind of a man by a friend who candidly warns him, helps him with advice, rebukes, stimulates, leads him back from error? "Blessed is he who finds a true friend" (Ecclus. XXV, 12). "He who finds him finds a treasure" (Ib., VI, 14). Now pious books we must count as truly faithful friends. For they solemnly warn us of our duties and of the precepts of lawful discipline; they awake in our souls the heavenly voices that have been silenced; they chastise the neglect

* *Sermons to the Clergy.*
† *Imitation* I, 1.
‡ *Letter LVIII to Paulinus*, n. 6.

of resolutions; they disturb the treacherous calm in which we live; they blame our less worthy inclinations which are sometimes disguised; they reveal the dangers that so often lie in the path of the unwary. And all this they do with such silent kindness that they show themselves not only to be our friends but our very best friends. Thus we have always, whenever we like, at our very side, friends ever ready to help us in our most secret necessities, friends whose voice is never harsh, whose counsel is never selfish, whose speech is never timid or false. There are many striking examples to show the salutary efficacy of pious books, but one that stands out beyond all others is that of Augustine, whose immense services to the Church dated their origin thence: "Take and read, take and read. . . . . I took up [the Epistles of Paul the Apostle] and read in silence . . . . As though the light of certainty were infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt disappeared."* But too often alas! in our days the contrary happens, and ecclesiastics are gradually plunged in the darkness of doubt, and follow the crooked paths of the age, chiefly because instead of pious and divine books they prefer others of all kinds and a host of periodicals, that bring seductive error and pestilence in their train. Be on your guard, beloved sons; rely not on the fact that you have reached years of maturity or even advanced age, and be not deluded by the treacherous hope that by reading these writings you will be in a better position to provide for the common welfare. Certain limits are to be observed, those prescribed by the laws of the Church, and those which prudence and charity for one's self point out; for when a man once takes these poisons into his heart, very rarely does he escape the disastrous consequence of the plague.

The profit accruing to the priest both from devout reading and from meditation on heavenly things will be more abundant if he takes steps to discover whether he religiously studies to turn to practical account in his life what he has read and meditated. Chrysostom has an excellent passage, especially adapted for priests, which is directly to the point: "Every day at nightfall, before sleep comes upon you, excite the judgment of your conscience, demand an account from it, and whatever evil counsels you have taken during

* *Confessions*, Bk. 8. c. 12.

the day . . . . pierce them, tear them to pieces, and do penance for them."*

How true this is, and how fruitful for Christian virtue, is shown by the excellent admonitions and exhortations of the most prudent masters of the spiritual life. Let us quote a striking passage in the teaching of St. Bernard: "As a careful examiner of your integrity, search out your own life in daily discussion with yourself. Watch diligently how much progress you make, or how much you have gone back. . . . . Strive to know yourself. . . . . Put all your transgressions before your own eyes. . . . . Set yourself before yourself as before another, and so weep for yourself."†

It is truly shameful if the words of Christ find their application here also: "The children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" (Luke XVI, 8). We see with what attention they look after their business; how frequently they go over the accounts of their expenditures and receipts; how accurately and closely they make up their accounts; how they bewail their losses and how eagerly they strive to make them good. But we, with our mind perhaps bent on securing honors, on increasing our substance, on winning only applause and honor by our knowledge, become tired or disgusted in carrying on what is our main concern, and that a most arduous one, viz., the acquiring of holiness. For but rarely do we collect ourselves and examine our hearts, which thus become overgrown with weeds as was the case of the lazy man's vineyard of which it was written: "I passed by the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the foolish man; and behold it was all filled with nettles, and thorns had covered the face thereof, and the stone-wall was broken down" (Prov. XXIV, 30, 31). And the matter becomes the more serious because of the increase of bad examples, so dangerous even for priestly virtue, so that there is need of walking every day with greater caution and of making more strenuous efforts. Now experience teaches that the man who exercises a frequent and rigid censorship over his thoughts, words, and actions is the better capable at once of hating and avoiding evil and of cultivating earnestly what is good. Experience equally teaches

* Exposit. Ps. IV, n. 8.

† *Meditationes piissimæ*, c. V, de quotid. sui ipsius exam.

us how many drawbacks and losses fall to the lot of the man who shuns the tribunal where justice sits in judgment, and his conscience appears as the culprit and as his accuser. In such a man you will in vain look for that circumspection of conduct, so highly praiseworthy in the Christian, which seeks to avoid even minor faults, that modesty of soul, so becoming to the priest, which trembles before every offence, even the slightest, against God. Nay, it sometimes happens even that this carelessness and negligence of himself reaches the point where he neglects the very sacrament of penance, than which Christ in His great mercy has left no more suitable remedy for human weakness. It cannot be denied, but it is to be bitterly deplored, that not unfrequently the man who deters others from sin by the fulminations of his sacred oratory, has no fear for himself and allows himself to become hardened in his own sins, that he who exhorts and incites others not to delay in cleansing themselves duly of their stains, is himself so slothful and even delays long months to do the same, that he who pours the oil and wine of salvation into the wounds of others, lies himself wounded by the wayside, taking no thought to secure for himself the healing hand of a brother, and that so very near to him. Alas, how much has happened everywhere in the past and how much is happening today absolutely unworthy in the sight of God and the Church, pernicious to the Christian people, and shameful for the priestly order!

When the duty of Our office obliges Us to think on all this, beloved sons, Our heart is filled with grief, and We groan aloud. Woe to the priest who does not know how to keep his place, and who unfaithfully pollutes the name of the holy God for whom he should be holy! The corruption of the best is most dreadful: "Great is the dignity of priests, but great is their ruin if they sin; let us rejoice in the height upon which we stand, but let us fear the depths to which we may fall; the joy of having held loftiest places is not so great as the grief of having fallen headlong into the abyss."* Woe then to the priest who unmindful of himself abandons the practice of prayer, who rejects the nourishment of spiritual reading, who never turns back to himself to listen to the voice of his accusing conscience! Neither the bleeding wounds of his own soul, nor the lamentations

* St. Jerome *on Ezechiel*, Bk. XIII, c. XLIV, v. 30.

of his mother, the Church, will rouse the wretched man until those terrible threats strike him: "Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes and hear with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and be converted and I heal them" (Is., VI, 10). May God, rich in his mercy, avert from every one of you, beloved sons, this terrible omen—He who sees Our heart in which there is no bitterness against anybody, but which is stirred with all the charity of a pastor and a father for all: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? Are not you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ?" (I Thess., II, 19.)

But you all see, all of you in all parts of the world, on what times the Church, in the hidden designs of God, has fallen. See also, then, and meditate how holy is the office you hold, that you may strive to be of help and assistance in her trials to her from whom you have recieved the great dignity with which you are endowed. Now, if never before, therefore, it is necessary that the clergy should be filled with no ordinary virtue, sound in example, watchful, active, thoroughly ready to work, and suffer mighty things for Christ. For nothing else do We pray and yearn more ardently than that this may be realized in you, one and all. Let chastity, therefore, ever flourish among you in unblemished honor, that choicest ornament of our order, in whose beauty as the priest is made like to the angels so is he, too, more venerable in the eyes of the Christian people, and richer in holy fruits. Let the reverence and obedience solemnly promised to those whom the Holy Ghost has placed as rulers of the Church ever flourish and increase, and especially let your minds and hearts be drawn daily in closer bonds of fidelity in the obedience most justly due to this Apostolic See. Let charity, that in no way seeketh its own, shine forth in all, so that the goads of envious contention and greedy ambition from human motives may be restrained and all your efforts unite in friendly emulation for the increase of God's glory. The fruits of your charity are waited for by "a great multitude of the sick, the blind, the lame, the withered," all in the direst misery, but most of all by dense throngs of youths, the fairest hope of the State and of Religion, who are now surrounded on every side by fallacies and corruption. Be diligent not only in catechetical instruction, which We commend once more and most

earnestly, but by every means and with all the skill of which you are capable, strive to deserve well of all. By elevating, protecting, healing, pacifying, set your hearts and your desires on winning or binding souls to Christ. How tirelessly, alas! and how laboriously and fearlessly His enemies are working and pressing on, to the immense ruin of souls! The Catholic Church rejoices and glories greatly in the charitable zeal of her clergy in preaching the gospel of Christian peace, in bringing salvation and civilization even to barbarous nations, among whom by their labors, often consecrated by the shedding of their blood, the kingdom of Christ is being daily propagated and our holy faith is winning new laurels and still greater lustre. And if your charitable offices, beloved sons, meet with envy, abuse, calumny, as only too frequently is the case, do not therefore give way to sadness, "be not weary in well-doing" (II Thess., III, 13). Keep before your eyes that host of great men who, following the example of the Apostles, in the midst of bitterest contumely borne for the name of Christ, "went rejoicing, blessing when they were cursed." For we are the sons and the brothers of the Saints whose names are resplendent in the book of life, whose praises the Church proclaims: "Let us not stain our glory."*

Once the spirit of sacerdotal grace is restored and increased among all orders of the clergy, Our designs, under the Divine guidance, for the restoration of all else, will acquire far more efficacy. Wherefore in addition to what We have already set forth, We deem it well to add certain subsidiary and appropriate means for preserving and fostering grace in the clergy. And first of these, a means known to and approved by all but not by all sufficiently tried, comes the devout retreat of the soul in what are known as spiritual exercises, yearly when this is possible, and either separately, or rather in union with others, for in this manner more fruit is usually obtained, following always the prescriptions of the Bishops. The advantage of this practice We Ourselves have sufficiently praised in laying down certain rules regarding discipline for the Roman clergy."†

Not less profitable for the soul are short retreats for a few hours every month, either privately or in common, a custom which We are

* I Macch., IX, 10.

† Letter to the Cardinal Vicar, December 27, 1904.

glad to see has been introduced in various places, with the favor of the Bishops who sometimes preside themselves over such gatherings.

Again We heartily commend a certain closer union of priests among themselves, as becomes brothers, under the sanction and the rule of the Bishop. It is certainly profitable that they should unite to render mutual assistance to one another in adversity, to protect the honor of their name and office against attack, and for other similar reasons. But it is far more important that they should join together for the purpose of promoting sacred knowledge, and first of all for maintaining with greater earnestness the holy purpose of their vocation, for consulting the interests of souls, by combining their counsels and their strength. The annals of the Church bear witness to the excellent fruit derived from this kind of communion in the days when priests generally lived a kind of common life. Why should not something of the kind be revived in our time, as far as may be done with due regard to different places and offices? Is there not good reason to hope that the former fruits would thus be produced again, to the joy of the Church? Indeed there are already in existence a number of such societies with the approval of the Bishops, and they are all the more useful when priests enter them early, at the very beginning of their priesthood. We Ourselves, during Our Episcopate, favored one which We found to be very suitable, and even now We continue to favor it, and others, in a special way. These aids to sacerdotal grace, and others which the watchful prudence of the Bishops may suggest as occasion serves, do you, beloved sons, so value and so employ, that every day more and more "you may walk worthy of the vocation in which you have been called" (Eph. IV, 1), honoring your ministry, and perfecting in you the will of God which is "your sanctification."

Such are Our chief thoughts and anxieties. Wherefore, raising Our eyes up to heaven, with the voice of Christ the Lord, We suppliantly and frequently repeat on behalf of all the clergy: "Holy Father . . . . sanctify them" (John XVII, 11, 17). We rejoice that in this holy aim great numbers of all ranks of the faithful are praying with us, deeply solicitous for your common good and that of the Church; nay more, that there are generous souls not a few, nor confined to those dedicated to religion but living in the midst of the world, who freely offer themselves, with constant

earnestness, as victims to God for the same purpose. May God Almighty receive their pure and powerful prayers in the odor of sweetness, nor despise our own most humble prayers! May He in His mercy and providence vouchsafe to hear us, We earnestly pray, and from the most sacred Heart of His beloved Son pour out on all the clergy the treasures of grace, charity and all virtue. Finally, beloved sons, We heartily thank you for the good wishes you have offered Us so abundantly on the approach of the fiftieth anniversary of Our priesthood, and that Our good wishes for you in return may be fulfilled over and over We put them in the hands of the great Virgin Mother, Queen of Apostles. For she it was who by her example taught those first fruits of the sacred order how they should persevere unanimously in prayer till they were clothed with virtue from above, and that this same virtue in them might be made greatly more abundant she obtained by her prayers, she increased and strengthened by her counsel for the rich fertility of their labors. Meanwhile, beloved sons, We earnestly hope that the peace of Christ may exult in your hearts with the joy of the Holy Ghost, through the Apostolic Benediction which We impart to you all most lovingly.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's on the fourth day of August in the year 1908, beginning the sixth year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS X, POPE.

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BRUNEAU, JOSEPH
AUTHOR

Our Priesthood.
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